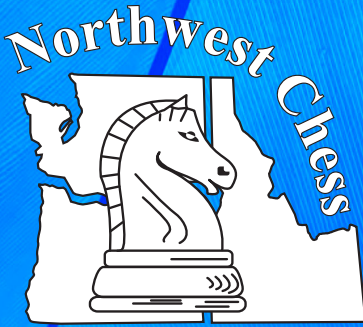


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(L-R) Matt Zavortink, Erik Richardson on Denali.
Photo credit: Nick Sweeney.

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(L-R) Rekha Sagar, Chouchan Airapetian, and Josh Sinanan
at the awards ceremony of the Washington Women's
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Reminders:

Washington Challenger's Cup

Redmond, Washington
November 4-6, 2022

Oregon Class Championships

Portland, Oregon
November 5-6, 2022



Aryan Deshpande. Photo credit: Xuhao He.

Aryan Deshpande National Master!

By Josh Sinanan

Redmond, Washington—October 7, 2022

Congratulations to Aryan Deshpande of Sammamish, Washington, who recently became Washington State's newest National Master!

Aryan achieved a US Chess rating of 2202 as a result of winning two games at the recent PNWCC Friday night tournament on October 7, held at the Microsoft campus in Redmond.

Along the way, Aryan won against young phenoms Michael Lin (1579) and Vidip Kona (1933). Way to go Aryan!!

[Click here to open the US Chess crosstable.](#)

72nd Oregon Open

Wilson Gibbins

The 2022 Oregon Open, held at the Lloyd Center in Portland, Oregon September 3-5, was once again a border battle between the great chess states of Oregon and Washington. But unlike last year when Washington players outnumbered Oregon players 67 to 66, this year Oregon held the edge 82 to 66. The 167 players came from nine other states and one other country—thanks to Dwayne Simms of Ontario Canada for making it an international event.

In the Open section, Matt Zavortink cruised to victory with five wins combined with a clinching last round draw against John Readey. This allowed Nick Raptis to catch John to tie for second. Nick was prevented from challenging for the lead by an unfortunate first-round loss (or fortunate if you are Dave Murray—see the games section below) in conjunction with some surprising FIDE Swiss System pairings determined by “floater” rules. Note: This is not a criticism of the directors or players; it is my cheap shot at FIDE. Matt played steady chess, demonstrated great opening preparation and endgame technique, and was never in any serious trouble.

Aaron Nicoski won the Under 2000 section, recovering from a first-round loss to notch five straight wins, including a last-round win over second-place Sean Northrup. Aaron credits the London formation that he played in every game, White and Black. Please don't groan when you hear “London formation” — Matt got a win out of it too. Conner Jenson won the Under 1700 with 5.5/6 points to demonstrate that his 2021 Oregon Class B Championship win was no fluke. Mauricio Rodriguez-Melendez finished second, losing only to Conner, and Neel Borate finished third, losing only to Mauricio, though he also conceded a draw to Patrick Adams. The under 1400 section was dominated by Washington players

as Naranbaatar Sod-Erdene secured first place with five wins followed by a last round draw against second-place Wade McCorkle. But it was back to Oregon in the Under 1100 section, as Neil Natarajan and Zachary Charles Daugherty tied for first, both with four wins and two draws, including a fourth-round draw against each other.

The Blitz Championship was won by current Idaho State Champion Kaustubh Kodihalli, who won all eight games. Many-time Oregon State Champion Nick Raptis and Washington's Vidip Kumar Kona tied for first in the Rapid event, both with perfect 4-0 scores.

Thanks to Chief TD Grisha Alpernas for directing, both for keeping things running smoothly and using his status as a FIDE arbiter to allow the tournament to be FIDE rated. Thanks to Chief Assistant TD Micah Smith, especially for the technical support that has become so crucial to running tournaments and for directing the blitz and rapid side-events. Thanks also to Assistant TD Lilly Tang. Finally, thanks to Greg Markowski and Sanjay Nair for helping with all the extra challenges that arise at every tournament.

We hope to see everyone again next year. But if you miss us, you can always drop in at the Oregon Class on November 5-6.

Matt Zavortink (2299) – Omar Beltran (1832) [D02]

72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R1), September 3, 2022
[Matt Zavortink]

A somewhat strange game where at times it seems as if both players have bad positions. Reviewing this game with the computer is quite humbling as it thinks I misevaluated practically every position and variation I looked at.

1.Nf3 d5 2.d4 e6 3.Bf4 c5 4.e3 Nf6 5.c3 Bd6 6.Bg3 Qc7

A good line for Black that I believe became popular around 2018 when Carlsen used it in several games. Black makes the strong positional threat of ...Nbd7, gaining irrevocable control over e5. Who knows what the best idea is, but White should certainly try to do something to disrupt Black's plan immediately.

7.dxc5 Qxc5 8.Nbd2

White's plan is Bd3, Qe2, and e4. It doesn't seem like Black should be worse, but it's a little tricky.

8...Bxg3 9.hxg3 Bd7!?

Not what I had looked at, but definitely a reasonable move.

10.Rc1

I did not continue with the more normal Bd3 as Black's last move was planning ...Bb5, however the computer shows an interesting resource for White to counter this plan: 10.Bd3 Bb5 11.b4 Qb6 12.Bc2!± and next White can push the black bishop backwards with a4.

10...Nc6

Here I thought I had two possible plans: 1) expand on the queenside, or 2) play Bd3 and meet ...e5 with e4. I went with the first plan, thinking that this justified the position of my rook on c1, though the computer shows that the second option was probably stronger. Overall, I was not feeling particularly inspired by my position. 10...Bb5 would be a mistake now because of the obvious 11.c4±.

11.b4 Qe7

11...Qd6!± is a better move for Black, gaining the options of meeting b5 with either ...Ne5 or ...Ne7. But it's understandable to not want to give White the option of Nc4 at the right moment.

12.b5 Na5 13.Qa4 b6

Pushing my pawn to b5 has introduced a number of different imbalances into the position, which was difficult for me to understand. For the moment Black's knight has been pushed to a5, away from the center, though it controls the important c4-square and can quickly reroute to the c5 outpost if I play a careless move like Bd3. I've also weakened a lot of other squares like a3 where I must constantly guard against the invasion of the black queen. I considered Ne5, stopping ...e5 and eyeing the sensitive c6-square, and e4, threatening e5 but risking opening the position with my king still in the center.



Position after 13...b6

14.e4

I was really having a hard time believing that this was the right move, but I didn't know what else to do. Stockfish wants to play 14.Ne5! and, if undisturbed, follow-up with g4-g5!, continuing the strange trend of White not developing or castling. I rejected Ne5 due to 14...Qd6 15.Qd4 Qa3 when I thought Black's queen was too active, but White's position is nicely held together by the simple defensive move 16.Rc2± again with g4-g5 coming soon.

14...h5?!

Too cooperative; Black should not allow White to continue with e5. 14...dxe4 15.Nxe4 Nxe4?! 16.Qxe4 looked risky for Black as I thought I could probably play Rxh7 after Black defends the a8-rook; 14...e5! 15.exd5 now ...Nxd5 would allow the same Qe4 idea as in the previous note, but Black can play a calm move like 15...0-0= and then try to regain the pawn. A hard position for me to evaluate, of course Stockfish gives the useless "0.00." Note that White cannot try to hold the extra pawn with 16.c4?? e4 17.Nd4 e3+.

15.e5 Ng4 16.Rc2

To be honest I didn't seriously consider 16.Qxg4 as I thought I would still have the

same option on the next turn, however, if White wants to do this, it should be done now as this variation forces the black queen to a3 where it may actually be a bit out of play in the ensuing complications. 16...Qa3 17.Rc2 hxg4 18.Rxh8+ Ke7 19.Rxa8 gxf3 20.Nxf3 with another 0.00 position.

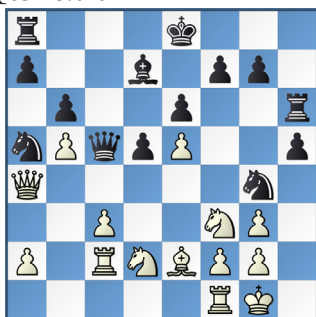
16...Rh6?!

Stopping Qxg4, but stranding the rook and knight on the kingside for the rest of the game. I was expecting 16...Qc5! when I thought I would have two appealing options 17.Qxg4 (17.Qd4? Qxd4 18.cxd4 (another variation I completely misevaluated) 18...Ke7 19.Bd3 Rac8 I thought Black might not be able to do this as the h8-rook is overloaded defending the h-pawn, but in reality Black has a decisive advantage after 20.Rxc8 Rxc8 21.Rxh5 Rc3-+) 17...hxg4 18.Rxh8+ Ke7 19.Rxa8 gxf3 20.Nxf3? (20.gxf3!= planning c4 next) 20...Bxb5 I saw this far and thought I should avoid all of this. (20...Qc7!≠ I did not consider this move).

17.Be2

17.Bd3 I think I avoided this more natural move due to the black knight rerouting to c5, but it's not a big deal 17...Nb7 18.Qd4±.

17...Qc5 18.0-0



Position after 18.0-0

18...Rc8?

I was afraid of 18...a6! and had not yet found a good solution. I thought I should be able to simply lose the b5-pawn and still have a perfectly fine position. 19.Qf4 axb5 I was concentrating on this position. The computer gives (19...Bxb5? 20.c4!+-) 20.Nb3! Nxb3 21.axb3± with a sizeable advantage for White due to Black's stranded g4-knight and bad d7-bishop.

19.Nb3! Nxb3 20.axb3

Now I felt I should be a bit better as I can untangle with Bd3 (so that the c2-rook

guards f2), Re1, and all of my pieces are starting to find their ideal squares. I was surprised to see that Stockfish thinks White already has a decisive advantage.

20...a5 21.Bd3 Ne3??

A blunder that instantly decides the game.

22.b4

It's unfortunate for Black that they cannot even get rook and bishop for the queen, as after 22...axb4 23.cxb4 Qxc2 24.Bxc2 Nxc2 25.Rc1 the c2-knight is trapped.

1-0

Kaustubh Kodihalli (1905) – Matt Zavortink (2299) [B36]

72nd Oregon Open

Portland, OR (R2), September 3, 2022

[Matt Zavortink]

A long game in a Maroczy Bind. White played quickly in the opening and seemed to know some theory, but quickly drifted into a position with a very poor light-squared bishop. There are some very interesting moments late in the game where both players overlooked key aspects of the bishops-of-opposite-color endgame.

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.c4 Nf6 6.Nc3 d6 7.Be2 Nxd4 8.Qxd4 Bg7 9.0-0 0-0 10.Qd3!? a5 11.Be3 a4

11...Bd7! is probably stronger than what I played, as White's Bd4 plan is nicely countered by a quick ...Bc6 and ...Nd7 when it begins to look like one of the traditional Maroczy Bind mainlines with White's queen slightly misplaced.

12.Rab1?!

Probably the start of a faulty plan. I believe White has mixed two different systems, and that the consistent way to play with the queen on d3 is to go Bd4 with the idea of f4. 12.Bd4! Qa5 13.f4 aiming for some kind of kingside attack or central break, when surely White is a bit better. Note that the white queen must be on d3 for this to work; if it were on the more typical d2-square in this position then Black would immediately win material with ...Nxe4!

12...Qa5 13.Rfc1 Be6 14.f3 Rfc8=

Black has fully equalized, and Stockfish is giving 0.00.

15.b3 axb3 16.axb3

I looked at this position in my preparation for the tournament, but with the white queen on d2 instead of d3. In that case

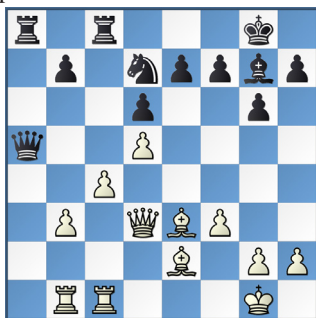
Black should go ...Qb4, however here White may have the response Bd2, so instead I figured I should immediately highlight the position of White's queen on d3 with the move.

16...Nd7 17.Nd5??

17.Bd2=

17...Bxd5 18.exd5??

I wasn't really sure of the objective evaluation here, but I didn't think White's position made much sense. I have two minor pieces that can control the various weak dark squares opposed to White's single dark-squared bishop, so I figured I had good chances. White's bishop-pair is not worth much as the light-squared bishop does not have a useful role.



Position after 18.exd5

18...Nc5

18...Qa2?? is perhaps simpler than what I did; during the game I had a feeling Stockfish would want to play 18...Qb4!, and it does! Black tempts White to go Bd2 when the black queen will go elsewhere and argue that White's bishop has become slightly less good.

I didn't think it was worth my time to try to understand such subtleties, but it's at least interesting to see the computer line: 19.Bd2 Qb6+ 20.Be3 Nc5 with the big point being that Black can meet 21.Qc2 with 21...Bh6!??

19.Qc2 Na6

I had a feeling this maneuver was not the objectively strongest way to play, as it simply seems too bizarre, but my knight does do a good job targeting the weak dark squares.

20.Qe4

This is a bit superficial; it would make sense if Black had to play a passive move like ...Kf8 to defend the e-pawn, but there are multiple tactical solutions for Black that aren't that hard to find.

20.Kh1!?

20...Qa2 21.Bf1 Nc5!?? 22.Qc2

22.Qxe7?? Re8 23.Qxd6 Nxb3 24.Re1 Rxe3-+; 22.Bxc5 dxc5 23.Qxe7? Bd4+ 24.Kh1 Qf2 I was a bit lazy calculating this variation, but I figured there's no way I could be worse with my queen and bishop so active. 25.Bd3 Re8! (25...Ra2 26.Rg1 is not so clear as White is coming with d6-d7 extremely quickly) 26.Qxb7 Ra2 27.Rg1 Qh4-+ threatening ...Be5 with a winning attack.

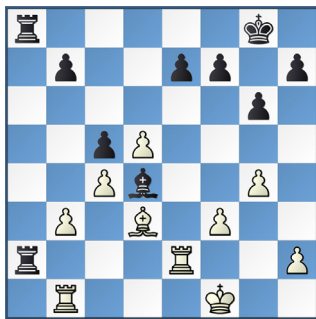
22...Qxc2 23.Rxc2 Ra3

Forcing White to capture on c5 in order to defend the b3-pawn.

24.Bxc5 dxc5

We've reached a bishops-of-opposite-color endgame with even material. I thought I should have good winning chances as my bishop will be extremely powerful on d4, preventing White from contesting the a-file and creating continuing threats against the white king thanks to the f-pawn being on f3.

25.Bd3 Bd4+ 26.Kf1 Rca8 27.Re2 Ra2 28.g4?



Position after 28.g4

I thought this was likely a very poor move as it gives White fewer ways to defend h2 in the future, and I gain permanent access to the f4-square. I now have a very long-term plan of attacking the h2-pawn, trying to force h3, and then marching my king g7-f6-e5-f3-g3. This position is very hard to play for White, and the computer evaluation throughout the next phase of the game alternates between completely losing and very unpleasant but possibly holdable. 28.Rxe7?? Rf2+ 29.Ke1 Rxc2-+ Black's other rook comes to a2 with decisive threats.

28...Rxe2 29.Bxe2 g5!

Securing the f4-square.

30.Rd1 Ra2 31.b4 Kg7

31...b6 32.bxc5 bxc5 is less good than the pawn structure in the game as here White is able to use the open b-file.

32.bxc5 Bxc5 33.Rb1

33.d6! exd6 34.Rd5 may be close to a fortress as White's rook on d5 greatly reduces the number of ways Black can try to progress on the kingside.

33...b6 34.Rb3 Kf6

34...Ra1+ 35.Kg2 Rg1+ 36.Kh3 I considered this type of position on a couple different occasions. White is almost mated, but not quite: 36...Bd6 37.Rxb6 Rh1 38.Kg2 Rxh2+ 39.Kf1=.

35.Rd3

Now I want to go ...Bd6 trying to force h3, but White can reply Rb3 counterattacking against the b6-pawn, so first:

35...Rb2 36.Rd1 Bd6 37.Rd4!?

The computer doesn't like this move, but I thought it was a good try. 37.h3 Ke5-+ Black's king invades.

37...Bxb2-+ 38.Re4 Bd6 39.Bd3 Rd2 40.Be2 h6 41.Ke1 Bb4 42.Kf1 Ra2 43.Kg1 Kg7 44.Kf1 Bc5 45.Kg2

Now slightly low on time I fail to find the best way to make progress.

45...f5??

45...Kg6! playing for ...h5 is the correct way to proceed. I felt nervous about putting my king on g6 due to Bd3 ideas, but they do not work. 46.Kf1 h5 47.Bd3 Kh6!-+ Black is threatening ...Rf2+ and also ...h4 to create a passed pawn.

46.Re6!

Suddenly White is close to having another fortress. 46.gxf5?? Kf6-+

46...f4 47.Kf1 Ra1+ 48.Kg2 Rg1+ 49.Kh2 Re1 50.Kg2 Rg1+ 51.Kh2 Re1 52.Kg2 Kf7

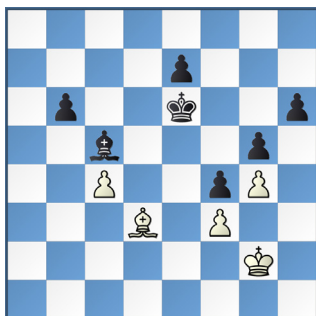
Here I was quite certain that White should draw if they just sit and don't do anything. I can try to set up a couple tricks by putting my bishop on e3 at the right moment, but I also must be careful that White's bishop doesn't activate, for example by getting to f5 or g6 via d3. White's king looks very restricted, but there are unfortunately no mating ideas. Instead, White panicked:

53.Bd3??

53.Kh2 may be the easiest move for White, keeping the bishop unrestricted to go to d3 if Black messes around too much; 53.Re4 I was expecting this move,

though I didn't appreciate the number of possible tactics during the game. Now White must find a lot of only moves: 53...Be3 54.Bf1! (54.Bd3?? Rg1+ 55.Kh2 Rd1-+ and suddenly White drops the bishop) 54...Rd1 55.Re6 (55.Be2?? falling for another trick 55...Rg1+ 56.Kh3 Re1 57.Bd3 Rh1+ 58.Kg2 Rg1+ 59.Kh2 (59.Kh3 Rg3+-+) 59...Rd1-+) 55...Rd2+ 56.Kh1 Rf2 57.Bg2. The position has changed a little bit and I guess Black can keep finding ways to continue the game, for example: 57...Bd4 58.Rxh6 Bf6 and perhaps Black can create some more tricks, or activate the king on the queenside, in the time it takes White to extract the rook from h6.

53...Rxe6 54.dxe6+ Kxe6-+



Position after 54...Kxe6

During the game I wasn't quite sure of the objective evaluation here, but I thought I had very good winning chances, and an easy plan to make progress. Black's main idea is to put the king on d4. Then White will need to guard the c4-pawn and would also like to stop Black's e-pawn from getting to e4. Unfortunately, the only square from which the white bishop can accomplish both of these tasks is d5, which with the black king on d4 will always allow Black to play ...b5! winning the c4-pawn, which will be stuck defending the d5-bishop.

On their own these two ideas are probably not sufficient to win, as White can allow ...e4, play fxe4, and then park the king on f1 forever while using the bishop to defend the c4- and g4-pawns. However, Black's seemingly useless h6-pawn will decide the game by, at some point, sacrificing itself on h5 to give Black two connected passed pawns. One huge subtlety that both players missed is that in the structure with ...e4 and fxe4, if White is able to put the king on the superior f3-square, then he will be able to draw.

From f3, the king will be ideally positioned to stop the passed f- and g-pawns after

Black's ...h5 sacrifice, and any attempt by Black to break the blockade by means of ...Kf5 will be met with an immediate check from the white bishop.

55.Bf5+ Ke5 56.Bc8 Kd4 57.Ba6 Ke3 58.Bc8 e5 59.Bb7 Kd3 60.Bd5 Kd4 61.Bf7 Bf8?

In typically paranoid fashion I put my bishop on f8 to pre-emptively stop the passed pawn that White will get after my ...h5 sacrifice. However, this allows the white king to go to f2, and then meet ...e4 with fxe4 Kxe4, then check the black king with the bishop, and then be threatening Kf3! with a blockade and draw.

Black should keep the bishop on c5 to prevent this idea, as the variation above with the white king on g2 rather than f2 will fail as Black's king will be able to get out of check by going to e3 at the end, denying White the opportunity to blockade the f3-square.

62.Kf2 e4??

I could still have corrected my mistake with ...Kd3 followed by ...Bc5+.

63.Ke2??

Here suddenly I felt that something was wrong and that I needed to "go for it" immediately:

63.fxe4 Kxe4 64.Bd5+ Kd4. Now Black is threatening ...b5 65.Bf7, but White is threatening Kf3 with a secure blockade. 65...h5 66.gxh5 g4 67.Be6! =

63...h5

63...e3 also wins.

64.gxh5

64.Bxh5 exf3+ 65.Kxf3 Kxc4 and the b-pawn decides the game.

64...g4 65.fxg4 Bh6

A nice position; White has finally equalized the material but Black's connected passed pawns immediately decide the game.

66.Kf2 Bg5 67.Kf1 Kd3 68.Bd5 e3 69.Bf3 Kxc4 70.Ke2 b5 71.Kd1 Kc3 72.Be4 b4 73.Ke2 b3

0-1

Matt Zavortink (2299) – Ryan Min (1982) [A49]

72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R3), September 4, 2022
[Matt Zavortink]

I was fortunate to not have to expend too much energy during this game; I followed my preparation until my opponent blundered. I failed to find a number of more accurate continuations after that, but the result was never really in doubt.

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 g6 3.b3 Bg7 4.Bb2 d6 5.d4 0-0 6.Bg2

This position is a bit difficult to play for Black. Though I think there are a couple decent equalizing tries they are hard to find for an unprepared player.

6...Nbd7 7.0-0 c6 8.Nbd2 Re8 9.e4 e5 10.dxe5

White's idea in this line is typically to aim for a good version of an exchange King's Indian. By leaving the pawn on c2, White has avoided giving Black a potential outpost on the d4-square as occurs in the mainline exchange variations.

10...dxe5

Here White would really like to play a move like Re1, then try to exploit the weak d6-square with Nc4 and maybe Ba3, but it's simply too slow. So White must continue energetically with:

11.Nc4

11.Re1 b5= Black will reorganize with ...Bf8-c5 and have a perfectly acceptable position.

11...Nc5?

Black must enter the complications:



L-R: Ryan Min, Matt Zavortink.
Photo credit: Lilly Tang.

11...Nxe4 12.Re1 Nec5 13.Nd6 with a weird mess and a lot more to prepare for anyone considering playing this as either color. White has managed to obnoxiously plant his knight on d6, but at least Black is up a pawn. In the game continuation White gets the knight to d6 “for free.”

12.Nd6 Rf8

12...Re7 seems a bit more natural, though White is still a pawn up after 13.Nxe5+-.

13.Nxe5 Qe7



Position after 13...Qe7

14.f4?!

14.Nec4! is nearly +4 as White is able to go e5 next. I looked at this and thought it was needlessly complex, but getting in e5 is a big achievement, so I should have spent more time calculating. 14...b5 15.Na5 Bd7 16.e5+-.

14...Rd8 15.Nxc8

Of course I considered 15.Nexf7 Qxf7 16.Nxf7 Rxd1 17.Raxd1 Kxf7 and thought White must have some edge. Stockfish shows that White is completely crushing, but only after the somewhat unintuitive (to me) 18.f5! gxf5 19.exf5 followed by the simple plan of h3, g4 and g5.

15...Raxc8 16.Qe2+-

I haven't played the most precisely but still have a stable position with an extra pawn and the bishop-pair.

16...Re8

Threatening ...Nfd7 Nc4 Bxb2 Nxd2 when the rook's presence on e8 causes White's e4 pawn to be hanging. 16...Nfd7 17.Nc4+-.

17.Ba3 b6

17...Nfd7?? 18.Nxd7+-.

18.Rad1 Rc7 19.Rfe1 Nh5 20.Nc4

White is ready to go e5 and re-occupy the d6-square with a knight.

20...Bc3 21.Rf1 b5

Desperately trying to complicate.

22.Nd6 b4 23.Nxe8 Qxe8 24.Qc4! Nxe4 25.Bxb4 Nhxg3 26.hxg3 Nhg3 27.Bxc3 Qe3+ 28.Rf2 Ne2+ 29.Qxe2 Qxc3 30.Qe5

1-0

Ryan Richardson (2030) –
Matt Zavortink (2299) [B35]

72nd Oregon Open

Portland, OR (R4), September 4, 2022

[Matt Zavortink]

Another Accelerated Dragon. I was happy to be able to play the ‘trendy’ 8...Re8 move (and to be able to remember the lines I had looked at before the tournament).

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.d4 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nc6 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Bc4 0-0

Now Black is threatening the “fork trick” with ...Nxe4 followed by d5, eliminating White's center pawn, so White must reply:

8.Bb3 Re8!?

The trendiest move at high levels, essentially just waiting to see what White is going to do. An argument can be made for 8...d6, seemingly allowing White to transpose to a normal Yugoslav Attack against the Dragon, but with the subtlety that Black didn't have to spend a tempo on ...Rc8 to provoke Bb3.

When I played the Accelerated Dragon as a kid 8...a5 was all the rage, but the advance of chess engines has not been kind to this variation: 9.0-0 a4 10.Nxa4 Nxe4 11.Nb5± and current theory suggests that Black's two center pawns do not compensate for the severely weakened b6-square; 8...d5!? is a modern idea, played by Gelfand among others 9.exd5 Na5 10.Qf3.

9.f3

9.0-0. If White gives up on the Yugoslav Attack setup then Black has an essentially solid position even having ‘wasted’ a move on ...Re8. After 9...d6 Black is threatening ...Ng4 and ...Na5 so White will lose the bishop-pair.

9...d5!

9...e6 is also possible, preparing ...d5 more slowly.

10.exd5 Nb4

Now compared to the move 8...d5 shown above, White cannot defend the d5-pawn with Qf3.

11.Nde2 e6 12.d6

12.dxe6? White is already worse after this natural capture: 12...Bxe6 White has trouble defending the e3-bishop but also the c2-pawn, as Black is threatening to remove both defenders by trading the light-squared bishops and the queens.

12...Nbd5 13.Bg5

I was now out of my preparation; I didn't think I'd looked at Bg5 before so I assumed I had at least an equal position. 13.Nxd5 exd5 14.Bd4 Qxd6= Black has an isolated queen pawn that is firmly blockaded but White's f3-pawn creates a lot of comparable weaknesses.

13...Qxd6 14.Qd2

I felt I should move my queen to get out of the pin on the d-file and considered b6, c5, c7, and even f8 (the computer's choice)! I thought 14.Bxf6 might be White's idea: 14...Bxf6 15.Ne4 Qe7 16.Nxf6+ Qxf6 I thought I'd have some advantage here though; I didn't consider the immediate equalizing move (16...Nxf6!?) 17.Qd4.

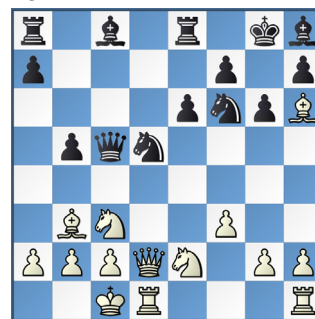
14...Qc5

Guarding c5, preparing ...b5, and eyeing the potentially weak e3-square.

15.0-0-0 b5 16.Bh6

16.Nxd5 Nxd5 White cannot win a pawn without hanging the e2-knight: 17.Bxd5 exd5 18.Qxd5 Qxd5 19.Rxd5 Rxe2 (19...h6 During the game I missed this much simpler move after which Black can safely take either e2 or g5) 20.Rd8+ Bf8 21.Bh6. It looks like I'm mated, but I have 21...Bb7 22.Rhd1 Re8! and Black is a clean piece up.; 16.h4!∞ with the idea of capturing on d5, when ...Nxd5 will allow White to continue attacking with h5. The computer gives 0.00.

16...Bh8



Position after 16...Bh8

Perhaps I was a bit lazy, but I played this move largely for psychological reasons. My opponent spent 20 minutes deciding

on Bh6, and I thought one of two things would happen. He'd either now enter the equal-ish endgame resulting from a bunch of captures on d5, in which I thought I can probably play forever with the bishop-pair, or he really wasn't sure what to do in which case he'd have to spend another 20 minutes! 16...Nxc3!? stopping White from capturing on d5 once and for all.

17.Rhe1?!

This move sort of admits that White has nothing on the kingside and commits to passive defense against Black's incoming queenside pawn storm. Now 17.Nxd5 Nxd5 18.Bxd5 works out better for White as the inclusion of Bh6 and ...Bh8 means I am unable to capture the hanging knight on e2: 18...exd5 19.Qxd5 Qxd5 20.Rxd5 Be6! 21.Rd2 Bxa2 and here I saw White was unable to trap my bishop: 22.b3 a5 though I definitely should have spent more time considering (22...Rac8!?. This strong move would probably become more obvious if the position were to actually arise on the board.) 23.Nd4! which keeps White in the game and may lead to the position fizzling out, for example with the computer line: 23...a4 24.Kb2 axb3 25.cxb3 Red8 26.Be3 b4 27.Ra1 Bxb3 28.Rxa8 Rxa8 29.Kxb3 Ra3+ 30.Kxb4 Rxc3=.

17...Bb7 18.Qg5?!

I don't think this does much.

18...Rac8 19.Rd2

Stockfish keeps White in the game with resources like 19.Nf4! Nxc3 20.Qxc5 Rxc5 21.bxc3 Rxc3 22.Nxe6! =

19...a5+

And suddenly Black has a crushing position.

20.Bxd5 exd5 21.Red1 b4 22.Nb1

22.Na4 Qb5 attacks both white knights.

22...a4 23.Nd4 a3 24.bxa3 bxa3 25.Nb3

Black is winning with any sort of slow move, but I found an immediate way to win material:

25...Ne4

Threatening ...Bb2#

26.c3 Bxc3

Setting up a decisive in-between move:

27.Nxc5 Bxd2+!

Without this move the entire sequence starting with 25...Ne4 would not work.

28.Nxd2 Rxc5+ 29.Kb1 Nxc5 30.Bxc5

And Black has won a clean exchange and pawn.

30...Kg7 31.Nb3 Rb5 32.Rd2 Re1+ 33.Kc2 Rb4 34.Bh4

Now in an amusing and absurd moment I overlooked the most important feature of the position and reached for the b4 rook to play ...Rc4+, planning Kd3 Re8 followed by ...Ba6! Before I could move my opponent resigned, anticipating the obviously superior move ...Rxb4 capturing the free bishop. I didn't realize the bishop was hanging until I checked this game with the computer.

0-1

**Matt Zavortink (2299) –
Harrison Toppen-Ryan (1818) [A11]**
72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R5), September 5, 2022
[Matt Zavortink]

A long, epic game. Black played too routinely in the opening and quickly found himself in a difficult position. I had an unusual amount of trouble focusing and managing my own intrusive thoughts about winning the game, the tournament, and the prize money, and after a few completely nonsensical moves combined with poor time management Black was back in the game. Thankfully my opponent played very quickly in my time pressure and allowed me to create new winning chances just when the position was starting to fizzle out.

1.Nf3 d5 2.g3 Nf6 3.Bg2 Bf5

In my opinion this move is very difficult to play as Black though it is probably objectively OK. If White plays unambitiously and allows Black to complete the full Reversed London setup (...e6, ...c6, ...h6, ...Nbd7, and ...Be7 in some order) then the position will be equal, but well-prepared White players can choose between a variety of quite critical plans to disrupt Black's setup and pose concrete problems. Most strong players who wish to develop their bishop in positions like this put it on g4 which theory suggests is a bit safer (but still not totally safe; see for example the game Nepomniachtchi – Duda from the 2022 Candidates).

4.c4 c6 5.Qb3

For many years 5.cxd5 cxd5 6.Qb3 was the way for White to play though it has

now been neutralized by the gambit: 6...Nc6! 7.Qxb7 Bd7 8.Qb3 e5#; 5.0-0 e6 6.cxd5 exd5 7.d3 Be7 8.Qb3 Qb6 9.Qc2! Another critical line; White plans Nc3 and e4 followed by Be3, likely with a small edge.

5...Qb6 6.d3 h6?!

6...e6 is more normal and common though it does allow White to win the bishop-pair, for example 7.Be3 Qxb3 8.axb3 a6 9.Nh4 Bg4 10.h3 Bh5 11.g4#.

7.Be3 dxc4?! 8.Qxc4

White has achieved a very pleasant position, with two center pawns against Black's one and the later possibility of a minority attack on the queenside.

8...Qa6 9.Qxa6

9.Nbd2 may be stronger.

9...Nxa6 10.0-0

When I traded queens, I felt that Black's position was extremely awkward here as ...e6 allows White to force further concessions. I expected a move like ...Bh7 when White has a nice edge.

10...e6?!

Missing or perhaps underestimating the idea.

11.Nd4

Threatening Nxc6 and to win the bishop-pair.

11...Nb4 12.a3

12.Nxf5 exf5 13.Rc1 followed by a quick minority attack may be the simplest path for White.

12...Nbd5 13.Nxf5 exf5 14.Bd4 Be7



Position after 14...Be7

Here I felt like I had a crushing advantage but spent too long looking for something immediately decisive. I was guessing that this position was close to +2 but all of the variations I looked at left me with an edge I felt was too small. So, after wasting too much time I played the move I thought

was the most complicated but completely overlooked Black's response.

15.Bh3?

15.e4 is the obvious try, but Black looks surprisingly OK after 15...fxe4 16.dxe4 Nc7!± when Black plans ...Ne6 and ...Bc5 with a grip on the weakened d4-square. Surely White still has some advantage with the bishop-pair but this did not feel like enough, and the computer agrees that White is only slightly better.; 15.Bxd5! cxd5 (15...Nxd5 16.Bxg7+-) 16.Nc3 0-0 17.Bxf6 Bxf6 18.Nxd5 Bxb2 19.Ra2 Be5 20.Ne7+ Kh7 21.Nxf5+- is the +2 continuation I was looking for. I actually saw this position during the game but didn't comprehend how strong it is.

15...f4!

Somehow I completely overlooked this move and thought Black had to go ...g6.

16.Nc3 fxd3 17.hxd3 0-0 18.e4 Nc7

18...Nxc3 seemed right to me, trading off the superfluous knight. 19.Bxc3 is what I was planning when I thought I must still have a small edge. (19.bxc3 looked wrong due to 19...c5 20.Be5 c4, but Stockfish shows the surprising 21.Bxf6! Bxf6 22.d4+- when the mass of central pawns provide White with a decisive advantage.)

19.Be3 e5

Now I realized I needed to be moving faster and tried to just get my pieces in the game while being ready to liquidate my backwards d-pawn.

20.Rfd1 Rfd8 21.Rac1 Ne6 22.Ne2

I spent some time considering 22.Bxe6!? fxe6 23.Nb5 threatening Nc7 and Bxc5, but didn't go for this due to 23...Rdc8 when Black keeps everything together. (The computer solves Black's problems more efficiently with 23...Rd7! 24.Bxc5 Bxc5 25.Rxc5 Nxe4=).

22...b6 23.f4 Bf8

A complex position. White still has some advantage due to the bishop-pair and potential pawn breaks. Black is routing his bishop to g7 to eye the d4 outpost, but this increases the strength of White's e5 idea as the bishop will be staring at a wall of pawns.

24.Kf2 g6 25.Rd2

25.f5!? gxf5 26.Bxf5

25...Bg7 26.Kf3 Ne8

Now Black is finally threatening to occupy the d4 outpost. 26...Rac8? 27.d4

cxd4 28.Rxc8 Rxc8 29.Nxd4 Nxd4+ 30.Rxd4 Rc2 31.e5 White's pieces are extremely active, and Black must be careful, for example: 31...Nh7 32.Rd7 Rxb2 33.e6!+-.

27.Bxe6

27.e5! was a bit stronger, maintaining the bishop-pair for the time being.

27...fxe6 28.e5

28.b4!?

28...Rd7

We were basically playing blitz at this point though my opponent had a lot of time. I panicked a bit and just tried to trade off my backwards pawn.

29.d4 Rad8 30.Rcd1 Bf8

30...cxd4 I was planning 31.Nxd4 when Black's position is a bit awkward; if he ever goes Kf7 then he will lose to the tactic Nc6 Rxd2 Nxd8+!

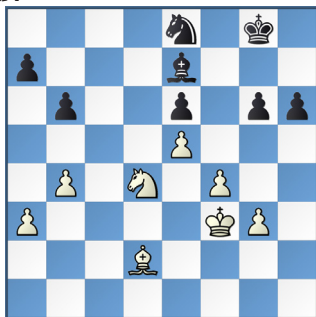
31.dxc5 Rxd2 32.Rxd2 Rxd2 33.Bxd2 Bxc5 34.b4

I really didn't have time to assess this with any precision, but I thought I might still be able to press for a while. It turns out, somewhat luckily, that my pieces are extremely well-placed to create immediate problems on the queenside and Black is simply lost.

34...Be7?!

34...Bf8 stays out of the way of a future Nc6.

35.Nd4



Position after 35.Nd4

A great example of the well-known "weak c6-square" motif common in openings like the Catalan, Hedgehog, and Reti.

35...Kf7 36.Nc6 a6 37.Be3 b5 38.Bb6!

Black is completely paralyzed, and this position should be an easy win for White. With my low time I still managed to make it unnecessarily interesting though!

38...g5 39.Nb8

39.Nxe7 Kxe7 40.fxg5 hxg5 41.Kg4+- is another way though I'm scared to enter these positions where I have a potentially useless bishop.

39...h5 40.Nxa6 Kg6 41.Nb8 h4 42.Nc6 Bf8 43.gxh4 gxh4 44.Kg4??

Still winning, but it deserves the double question marks for practicality. 44.Nd4 Obviously better, keeping the Black king from invading through f5.

44...h3! 45.Kxh3 Kf5 46.Nd4+ Kxf4 47.Nxe6+ Kxe5 48.Nxf8 Kd5

An interesting position. Black has clear hopes of drawing based on capturing both of White's pawns while retaining his knight. Unfortunately, White's knight and bishop are well-placed to create threats of their own.

49.Kg3 Kc4 50.Ne6 Kb3 51.Nc7 Nd6

51...Kxa3 52.Nxe8 Kxb4 53.Nd6 Ka4 54.Kf3 b4 55.Ke3 b3 56.Kd3 Ka3 57.Nc4+- and the pawn is stopped.

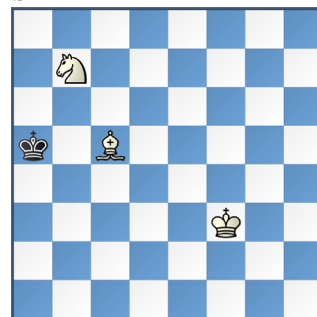
52.Bc5 Nb7 53.Nxb5 Ka4 54.Nd6 Nd8 55.Kf3

This move allows Black to reach his desired K vs KBN endgame so you may consider giving it a "!" for forcing a known winning ending, or a "?" for the difficulty of executing said ending, depending on your perspective. The point is that if Black doesn't take on a3, White will walk the king over to the queenside and win easily. If Black does take, the b-pawn runs until Black's knight must sacrifice itself. 55.b5 might be easier. I thought the game continuation led by force to KNB vs K so I didn't consider anything else.

55...Kxa3 56.b5+ Ka4 57.b6 Ka5 58.b7 Nxb7

58...Nc6 59.Ba7!

59.Nxb7+



Position after 59.Nxb7+

Admittedly it was a bit stressful to do this on the 30 second increment.

59...Kb5 60.Be3 Kc6 61.Nc5 Kd5 62.Kf4 Kc4 63.Ke4 Kb5 64.Kd5 Kb6 65.Ne6+ Kb5 66.Bc5 Ka5

I felt good that I had quickly gotten Black's king to the edge. But it took me a couple moves to realize my knight is on the wrong circuit.

67.Nd4 Ka6 68.Kc6 Ka5 69.Ne2 Ka6 70.Nc1 Ka5 71.Nd3 Ka6

71...Ka4 72.Bb4 Kb3 73.Kb5 Kc2 74.Nf2 and the knight and bishop are coordinating correctly to restrict the king.

72.Bb4 Ka7 73.Bd6 Ka6 74.Nb4+ Ka7 75.Nd5 Ka6 76.Nb6 Ka5 77.Be7 Ka6 78.Bb4 Ka7 79.Bd6 Ka6

Finally reaching the standard position. The tablebase says mate in 18 so despite my sloppy technique I'm going to mate with 12 moves to spare before the 50 move rule kicks in.

80.Bb8 Ka5 81.Nd5 Ka4 82.Kc5 Kb3 83.Nb4 Ka4

83...Kc3 This is the key position to commit to memory as it looks like the black king is escaping, but White has 84.Bf4!

84.Kc4 Ka5 85.Bc7+ Ka4 86.Nd3 Ka3 87.Bb6 Ka4 88.Nb2+ Ka3 89.Kc3 Ka2 90.Kc2 Ka1 91.Bc5 Ka2 92.Nd3 Ka1 93.Bb4 Ka2 94.Nc1+ Ka1 95.Bc3#

1-0

**Matt Zavortink (2299) –
John Readey (2278) [D02]**

72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R6), September 5, 2022
[Matt Zavortink]

My fourth white game of the tournament!? Readey had a half-point less than me, so I only needed a draw to win the tournament. He was in clear second, so perhaps he is also happy to draw and guarantee second place rather than risk losing.

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.Bf4 e6 4.e3 Bd6

I had prepared a bit and was expecting a system with an early ...Qb6. This move told me he had probably prepared something unusual as well, so I played an early deviation:

5.Ne5!?

I'm still not sure if this move is underrated or just not that good. At least it

introduces a number of subtle nuances into the typical London plans for both sides. Sometimes White may be able to benefit from not having 'wasted' a tempo on Bg3, though there are downsides as well.

5...0-0 6.Nd2 b6 7.c3 e5 8.Bd3?!

8.h4! Stockfish insists White is better after this crude move. I forgot what was in my files and for some reason thought I was supposed to go Bd3 first and only then h4 depending on Black's response.

8...Qc7!

A good, generally useful waiting move.

9.0-0

I could transpose to one of the mainlines with 9.Bg3 Nc6 (*9...Ba6!?* is likely stronger now that White has 'wasted' a tempo on Bg3) 10.f4 Bb7 11.0-0 when Black will begin the standard maneuver in such positions with 11...Ne7! planning ...Nf5, ...Be7, and ...Nd6 to lockdown the e4-square.

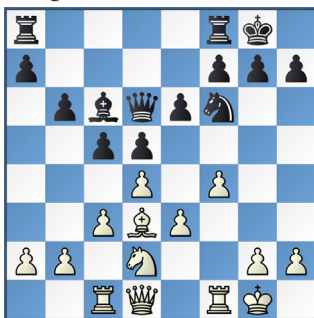
9...Bb7 10.Rc1

Possibly suggesting c4 next depending on what Black does. A complex position. The computer suggests both sides make waiting moves like ...a5!

10...Nc6 11.Nxc6 Bxc6

Now I don't want to let Black break with ...e5, so the only option is: 11...Bxf4 seemed less good than the immediate capture on c6 as after 12.exf4 Bxc6 13.Qf3 I get at least a couple further obvious moves to improve my position, like Re1.

12.Bxd6 Qxd6 13.f4



Position after 13.f4

Superficially it looks like White may be better due to the superior bishop, but how good can a "good" version of the Stonewall really be? If Stockfish is to be believed, the answer is "not very good." From a practical point of view, I wasn't

that excited to play this position, as Black has a number of easy, low-commitment "creeping" moves to progress on the queenside, like ...b5 and ...a5 and ...b4, possibly with the inclusion of ...c4. Of course, White has the potential to create a strong attack against Black's king, but White's ideas like Rf3-h3 and g4-g5 are all extremely weakening and liable to backfire if the position somehow opens up. 13.Nf3?! Nd7 and I can't stop ...e5 though the computer still says it's equal after something like 14.Re1 e5 15.dxe5 Nxe5 16.Nxe5 Qxe5 17.Qc2

13...Ne4?!

Black offered a draw, and I accepted to secure clear first in the tournament.

13...b5^o

½-½

**Brent Baxter (1800) –
Aaron Nicoski (1794) [A07]**

72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R4), September 4, 2022
[Aaron Nicoski]

In round four, I drew the toughest opponent in my section (in my opinion), but I knew I had the upper hand in that he played 1.b3 openings. I even was talked to James Nelson before the game who was sitting on the board right next to me. I said before Brent came in the room, "I bet you he will play b3 on the first move!" James chuckled because he knows the wild openings Brent plays, and I was, well, half right! Lol.

1.Nf3 d5 2.b3 Bf5

This is what I had prepared in the few minutes I had after pairings were finalized. I was going to go with what I know best so I played the Reverse London again just like in my game that ended favorably just a few hours prior.

3.Bb2 e6 4.g3 Nf6 5.Bg2 Be7 6.d3 h6

Keeping the all-important "London bishop" alive which will prove vital to the upcoming combinational sequence later on in the game.

7.Nbd2 0-0 8.0-0 Nbd7 9.Re1 Bh7

An anticipatory move because I know I will not be able to prevent an easy e4 pawn break by White, so I am buying a little time to figure out my overall middle game plan. Plus, this threw Brent for a loop. He already started thinking for quite a while before continuing with his plan of

e4.

10.e4 c6 11.e5 Ne8 12.Qe2 a5

Without a White knight on c3 it makes it easier to play a5–a4, so it almost forces White’s next move.

13.a4 b5

I spent a good amount of clock here debating on whether to delay b5 or not. It was a long-term risk because I was removing the anchor of my pawn-wedge against his light-squared bishop, especially when I knew Nd4 could be a possible move he could play putting pressure on newly weakened c-pawn.

14.Nd4

The exact move I predicted he would play.

14...Qb6! 15.Qg4

Setting up a cheap tactic if I play a normal-looking move like pawn to b4.

15...Nc7

Defending both of my potential weak points and reconnecting my rooks. 15...b4?! 16.Nxe6! fxe6 17.Qxe6+ Rf7 18.Qxd7 Qxf2+ 19.Kh1 Qxd2 20.Qxc6 Rf2? 21.Bxd5+ Kh8 22.Bg2±.

16.Kh1!?



Position after 16.Kh1

A little hard to see why this is such a mistake until you see my follow-up combination so I will let the chess moves do some of the talking, but just look at all of his hanging pieces and weak squares! If I could only get a knight safely to the d3-square. Hmmm.

16...bxa4!! 17.Rxa4

17.bxa4?? Qxb2+-

17...Nc5

The vital tempo I needed to get my knight to the beautiful d3-square!

18.Raa1?

18.Ra2! a4 19.Rea1 axb3 20.N2xb3 Nxb3

21.Nxb3 Bxd3±

18...Bxd3! 19.f4

19.cxd3 Nxd3 20.Re2 Nxb2±

19...Bxc2!!



Position after 19...Bxc2

Saying, “Take my bishop I dare you!” No, actually I was removing the final defender of the d3-square so my knight can gallop right on in.

20.Nxc2 Nd3 21.Bd4 c5

21...Qxd4 22.Nxd4 Nf2+ 23.Kg1 Nxg4 24.h3 (24.Nxc6? Bc5+ 25.Kf1 Ne3+±) 24...Bc5 25.N2f3∞

22.Bg1 Nxe1

This is as far as I could originally see, but obviously great for Black so didn’t hesitate on 16...bxa4!

23.Rxe1 a4!

Final uppercut...getting my queen or rook to the second rank where his hanging pieces lie in wait to die.

24.bxa4 Qb2 25.Qd1! Rxa4 26.Ne3 Ra2

Brent actually smiled as he resigned, which I never thought I would see in my life. He said, “I completely missed Bxd3. Had your bishop been on a6 or something, I probably would have seen the tactic, but your bishop was hiding!” One of my personal all-time favorite games up until now.

0–1

Aaron Nicoski (1794) – Sean Northrup (1864) [D02]

72nd Oregon Open

Portland, OR (R6), September 5, 2022

[Aaron Nicoski]

Final round of the Oregon Open, and my dream has come true! I am getting a chance to play for first place. If I lose, I might be out of the running, the tournament that has been my nemesis for over a decade. Let’s see how the game goes!

1.d4 Nf6 2.Bf4 e6 3.e3 d5 4.Nd2 b6 5.Ngf3

Delaying the development of my light-squared bishop in case he plays Ba6 next move.

5...Bb7 6.Bd3 Nbd7 7.0-0 Be7 8.Ne5 Nxe5 9.Bxe5

9.dxe5?! Nd7 now that I am castled, my attack is slowed down quite a bit.

9...0-0 10.Qf3

Preventing ...Ne4 and getting my queen prepared to go to the h3-square.

10...Nd7 11.Bf4 c5 12.c3 Re8 13.Qh3 g6

13...Nf8 I always like the Nf8 no mate theme personally.

14.Nf3 Bf6

Good move coming back to the f8–h6 diagonal and at the same time stopping Ne5 without me doubling my pawns and opening up his light-squared bishop down the long diagonal.

15.Qg3

I probably spent the most time, surprisingly, on this move deciding how to play the middlegame. I decided to move my queen off the h-file, push my h-pawn, and play Ng5, f3, Kf2, and Rh1 when allowed.

15...Bg7 16.h4 f6

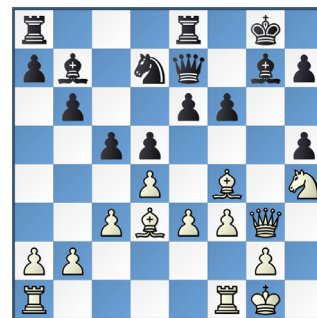
My opponent spent over 20 minutes on this move. 16...h5 17.Bxg6 fxg6 18.Qxg6±

17.h5 gxh5

17...g5 18.Nxg5 fxg5 19.Bxg5 Qb8 20.Bf4+-

18.Nh4 Qe7 19.f3

Just continuing with my plan to bring my rooks to the h-file.



Position after 19.f3

19...Kh8?

Obviously, my opponent did not anticipate

my next series of moves which gave me a *huge* piece superiority on the kingside where he was basically left with only one defender.

20.Bg6!! Rec8!

20...hxg6?? 21.Nxg6+; 20...Red8??
21.Bd6; 20...Rf8? 21.Bd6

21.Bd6 Qd8! 22.Bxh5 f5

Giving the f6-square for his pieces to come back to the defense of the kingside.

23.Kf2 Qf6

23...Bf6 24.Rh1 Bxh4 25.Rxh4+-

**24.Rh1 h6 25.Ng6+ Kh7 26.Be7! Qf7
27.Nf8+ Rxf8 28.Bxf7 Rxf7 29.Bg5 Kg8
30.Rxh6!**

30.Bxh6 Kf8 31.Bxg7+ Rxg7 32.Rh8+?
Kf7

**30...cxd4 31.Rah1 dxc3 32.bxc3 Rc8
33.Rxe6 Rxc3 34.Re8+ Nf8 35.Qb8?!**

I was beginning to get into time trouble and made a good visually-looking move (for all that's worth), but brought my queen away from the g-file and attack the well-defended knight on f8. 35.Qh4 Rc2+ 36.Kg3 Be5+ 37.f4+-

**35...d4 36.exd4 Bxd4+ 37.Kg3 Be5??
38.Qe5 f4+ 39.Kg4**

1-0

**Dave Murray (1867) –
Nick Raptis (2376) [A43]**

72nd Oregon Open

Portland, OR (R1), September 3, 2022

[David Murray]

Before this round one, I couldn't get through the crowd of players to look at the pairing, so I ducked into the playroom to set my bag down and wait. I ended up near board one where "the Raptor" was sitting. "It's you and me, huh?". *blink*. Later, a couple of players asked me how to achieve the result I did, and I told them to play your best and try to make it a good game to learn from afterward. They acted like that was obvious advice, but it wasn't to me until recently. If you consider pairings like this to be the best possible pairing because of the opportunity to learn, you will eventually surprise yourself.

1.d4 c5 2.d5

I wasn't sure what "my stuff" was after 1...c5. There are lines where I play d4-d5 and others where I capture and hold on



*L-R: Dave Murray, Nick Raptis.
Photo credit: Lilly Tang.*

to the pawn in sharp positions. I hoped to steer the game toward a familiar version of the former, and that is what happened.

2...Nf6 3.Nc3

What follows is memorized theory through 12.Be2. All hail spaced repetition!

**3...g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.e4 d6 6.Bb5+ Bd7
7.a4 0-0 8.Be2**

Weird move that says, "I have been practicing GM repertoire lines." The idea is to make ...b7-b5 difficult, and Black will have to move their piece on d7 soon so no time has been lost.

**8...Bg4 9.0-0 Nbd7 10.h3 Bxf3 11.Bxf3
a6 12.Be2**

Again, and with the same idea of fighting against ...b5.

12...Ne8

This is the end of the repertoire line. White has a comfortable amount of space in the center and kingside, and Black is going to continue to try for ...b5.

13.Bf4 Rb8 14.Qd2 Nc7 15.Bh6

I'm never sure about this stock maneuver since it doesn't show up much in the repertoire lines. But if Black breaks through on the queenside, I don't want their bishop on the long diagonal to contribute.

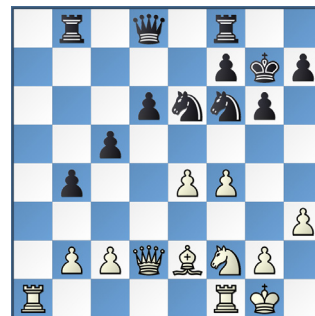
15...b5 16.axb5

16.Bxg7 would have been more accurate. In the game, Black had the option to play 16...Bxh6.

**16...axb5 17.Bxg7 Kxg7 18.f4 b4 19.Nd1
Nf6 20.Nf2 e6**

White's reply seems forced, but I spotted a good follow-up.

21.dxe6 Nxe6



Position after 21...Nxe6

22.Bc4!

When I ask people how this bishop contributes to the game, they usually point to the potential attack on the f7-square. Actually, its main function is to occupy the c4-square forever, freezing Black's pawn expansion.

22...Re8

My first instinct was to defend the twice-attacked e4-pawn with 23.Rfe1 or the stranger-looking 23.Rae1. Since 23.Rae1

looked weird, I tried to talk myself into playing it with, “If I play Rael, I am saying that I will never play Ra1–a6, and that’s okay because…” and I couldn’t finish the thought. Not only do I not want to rule out Ra6, but Ra6 *right now* looks spicy.

23.Ra6 d5!

How many players in the Open section would play this move? It’s the top engine choice. 23…Rb6 24.Rxb6 Qxb6 25.e5 dxe5 26.fxe5 Ng8 27.Ne4+- White is winning.

24.exd5 Nd4

I thought that 24…Nc7 was Black’s idea, but 24…Nd4 is again the best move. This is the critical moment of the game.

25.Re1!

Black was about to play …Ne4, and the rook on f1 was the only piece not contributing. But can’t Black win a pawn with …Rxe1 and …Nxc2?

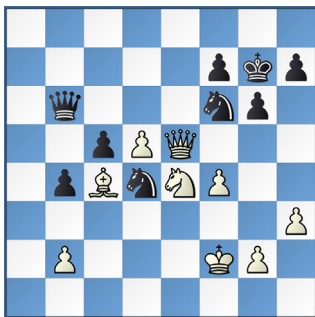
25…Rxe1+?

25…Ra8 or 25…Nf5 were best, maintaining the tension.

26.Qxe1 Nxc2? 27.Qe5!

The point of 25.Re1. I didn’t see a definitive knockout but did see that this position would be awkward to defend for Black and easy to play for White. Black’s king can’t move, and the queen can only move to squares that defend f6. Ne4 is coming.

27…Rb6 28.Rxb6 Qxb6 29.Ne4 Nd4 30.Kf2!!



Position after 30.Kf2

Many other moves were winning, but this was the best and the flashiest. Black can do nothing to stop g2–g4 and g4–g5. I had originally intended 30.d6, with ideas of pushing the d-pawn or playing Qe7 in some lines. But …Nc6 would be played, breaking the pin on f6 and covering the promotion-square. Looking for a better

move, I saw the idea of g2–g4–g5 and almost played 30.g4?!, which would have allowed the game-ending 30…Nf3+. So 30.Kf2 h5, and several thinking minutes later… 31.g4 still wins!

30…Nb3

30…h5 31.g4 hxg4 32.hxg4 g5 33.Qxg5+-

31.Nxf6 Nd2 32.Nd7+ f6 33.Qe7+

1–0

**Dave Murray (1867) –
Carl Haessler (2200) [D11]**

72nd Oregon Open

Portland, OR (R3), September 4, 2022

[David Murray]

1.d4 d5 2.Nf3 Bf5 3.c4 e6 4.Nc3 c6 5.Qb3 Qb6

Another line that I was ready for from studying a course. We will play 6.c5, Black will capture on b3, after axb3, b3–b4 will be our next move.

6.c5 Qxb3 7.axb3 Na6

And cue the 10- 15-minute think. This wasn’t in the course. (It actually wasn’t when I checked later).

8.Bf4

This was the best and most played move.

8…Nf6

And here White has an interesting and quite strong sacrificial idea. One of my study partners suggested it as well.

9.Kd2

I was solely focused on preventing …Bc2 and/or …Nb4. 9.Rxa6! bxa6 10.e3 g5 11.Be5 Bg7 12.Bxa6 0-0 13.b4+- White is clearly better.

9…Ne4+ 10.Nxe4 dxe4 11.Nh4

As is typical, when one side plays this thinking that they will pick up the bishop-pair without drama, they often find out otherwise.

11…Bg4 12.h3 Bh5 13.g4 Be7! 14.Ng2 Bg6 15.Kc3 0-0 16.e3 Nb8 17.Bxb8?!

The ability to fight for dark squares will be missed before long.

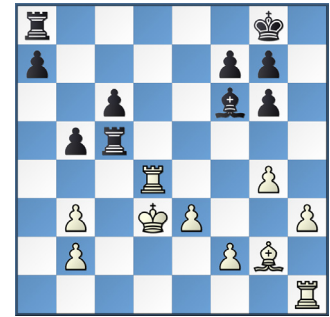
17…Rfxb8 18.Nf4 e5 19.dxe5 Bxc5 20.Nxg6?!

What were we saying about pieces that can fight for dark squares?

20…hxg6 21.Bg2 Re8 22.Bxe4 Rxe5 23.Bg2 Be7! 24.Ra4

Desperation.

24…b5 25.Re4 Rc5+ 26.Kd3 Bf6 27.Rd4!?



Position after 27.Rd4

This is a ? move, but the idea is good in the 27.b4 Rd8+ 28.Rd4 line below. I submit that White’s chances to survive after …Rd8+ or …Bxb2 would be minimal, so it’s time for a “change the nature of the position” type of move. 27.b4 Rd8+ 28.Rd4 Bxd4 29.bxc5 Bxb2+ 30.Kc2 Ba3 31.Rd1 Rxd1 32.Kxd1 Bxc5, and we would have had to foresee that this ending is equal. I could imagine Carl withdrawing from the tournament with a cryptic tweet if this had happened.

27…Bxd4 28.exd4 Rd8 29.Ra1 Rd6 30.Be4!

To cover c2 so that Ke3 is a threat to win the rook!

30…b4 31.Ke3 Rb5

Black might still be better, but it felt good to be forcing them to make only moves and have to regroup slowly.

32.Rxa7

GM Yaroslav Zherebukh calls a pawn plus a bishop for a rook “a trade” and not the loss of an exchange (a concept he will tell you is imaginary).

32…f5 33.Bg2 Rb8 34.Ra4 fxc4? =

The decisive mistake. Once White is allowed to play Be4 and f3, Black should not be able to make progress.

35.hxg4 Re8+ 36.Be4! Rb8 37.Kd3 Kf7 38.Ra7+ Kf8 39.Ra4 Rb7 40.f3

An important move for the sequence to come.

40…Ke7 41.Kc4 Rbd7 42.Rxb4 Rxd4+ 43.Kc5 Rxb4 44.Kxb4

If f3 were not played, 44…Rd4+ would end the game.

44…Rd6 45.Kc5 Kd7 46.b4 Kc7 47.b3!

Before we play b4–b5, we need to play

this to keep one b-pawn. Otherwise, Black will have the typical idea of sacrificing the exchange into a winning king and pawn ending.

47...g5 48.b5 cxb5 49.Kxb5 Rb6+ 50.Kc4 Kd6 51.b4 Rb8 52.b5 Rb6 53.Kb4 Rb8 54.Kc4 Rb6 55.Kb4=

½-½

**Viktors Pupols (2200) –
Harrison Toppen-Ryan (1818) [E20]**
72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R1), September 3, 2022
[Harrison Toppen-Ryan]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Bb4 4.Bd2

A rare and a bit of a passive move. Not the most ambitious try for White in the Nimzo.

4...Nc6?!

The idea of this move is that Black will block their c-pawn and play on the dark squares with d6 and e5. This idea can also be used against the classical 4.Qc2 variation as well for Black, called the Zurich Variation of the Nimzo. 4...c5 5.Nf3 cxd4 6.Nxd4 0-0 7.e3 Nc6 8.Be2 d5 9.cxd5

5.Nf3 d6 6.e3 0-0 7.Bd3 e5

Fighting for the dark squares.

8.d5 Ne7 9.Qc2 c6 10.dxc6 bxc6 11.0-0 Ng6 12.Ne4?!

A natural move, however, this allows Black to trade off the dark-square bishops which is better than the usual trading for the knight of c3. 12.Rfd1 is the better option, developing the rook and keeping some tension.

12...Bxd2 13.Nxf6+ Qxf6 14.Qxd2 Bg4 15.Ne1 Rfd8 16.f3 Bf5 17.Qc2 Bxd3 18.Nxd3 d5 19.e5?!

I'm not too sure about closing up the center for White, as now Black can have good play in the center after Black expands on the queenside with:

19...a5 20.b3 Ne7?!

A fluke, and once again a bit too passive here. It was better to just start an attack and go all out belligerent with: 20...h5 21.Rae1 Ra7 22.Kh1 Rad7 23.Qd2 d4 24.e4 Nf4 25.Nxf4 Qxf4 26.Qxf4 exf4 27.Rd1

21.Qb2 d4 22.e4∞

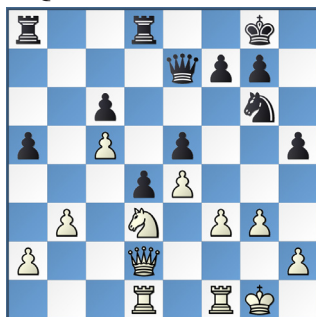
Still fairly equal. Both sides are just shuffling their pieces and pawns at the

moment.

22...Ng6 23.g3 Qg5 24.Rad1 h5!?

I felt a storm brewing at this point. Not as strong as before, but still looking just as scary for White.

25.Qd2 Qe7



Position after 25...Qe7

When going for the attack, *do not trade* unless you have a direct win afterward. Keeping the queens on Black still has better chances for something in the future despite the fish saying that this position is equal. 25...Qxd2?! 26.Rxd2 f6 27.Rc2 Rab8 28.h4=

26.Rc1 Qe6 27.Rc4 f5?

Regretfully, I underestimated Qg5! for White, after which not only has White defended well but is also better which play on the kingside. 27...a4 28.Rxa4

28.Ra4?? Too slow! Black now has the counterplay he needs in order to keep White in his feet. My opponent also has less than five minutes now on the clock. That, plus facing an attack will not be fun for him soon. 28.Qg5

28...fxe4! 29.fxe4 Rf8!±

Here it comes. White needs to play *very* accurately with less than five minutes on the clock to survive this.

30.Rxf8+?!

And this move just helps Black. As I wanted to give up the a5-pawn and control the f-file anyway. White's extra pawns on the queenside won't help him here. 30.Rf2 Rxf2 31.Nxf2 Rf8 32.b4 axb4.

30...Rxf8→ 31.Qe2

White tries to defend, but his passive rook on a4 won't be helping out anytime soon. 31.Nf2±

31...h4 32.Nf2 Qe7 33.Rxa5??-+

Oh no my a5 pawn! 33.Nh3 Qd8

33...Qg5



It's *very* important here to play Qg5 right away because if: 33...hxg3? 34.hxg3 Qg5 35.Kh2! Qe3 36.Qxe3 dxe3 37.Nd3 Rd8± Black is still better here but this isn't as strong as what happened in the game.

34.Qc4+

My opponent played these next two moves instantly despite still having around four minutes on the clock. Yet these just allow Black to win immediately.

34...Kh7 35.Qe6? Qe3

0-1

**Harrison Toppen-Ryan (1818) –
David Paez (1978) [D10]**
72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R2), September 3, 2022
[Harrison Toppen-Ryan]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.Bg5!?

What in tarnation is this!? Did White just forget to play Nc3 first? Nope! This line with an early Bg5 is very rare and throws a lot of Slav players off guard.

4...Nf6

The most natural, common, and probably correct move here. Now White will trade and willingly give up the bishop-pair. In return, Black has a ruined pawn structure with whichever pawn they may choose to recapture on f6.

5.Bxf6 gxf6

I prefer this way for Black, not allowing the d5-pawn to be an isolated target.

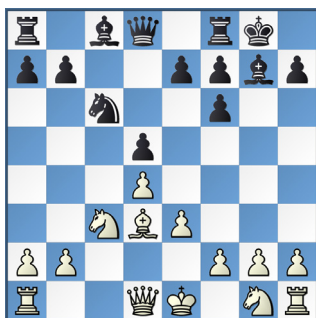
6.Nc3 Bg7?!

I had a good game against NM/WFM Zoey Tang back at the Vancouver Open this year where Black instead tried: 6...Nc6 7.e3 e6 8.Bd3 Bd6 9.g3 a6 10.a3 b6 11.Nf3 Bb7 12.0-0 Ne7 13.Qd2 e5?? 14.e4! exd4 15.Nxd5↑ and White had all of the fun here.; 6...Bf5 7.e3 e6 8.Rc1 Nd7 9.g3 Rc8 10.Bg2 Qb6 11.Qd2

7.e3 0-0?!

7...Nc6 8.Bb5

8.Bd3 Nc6



Position after 8...Nc6

9.Nge2?!

This move isn't the worst, but I could've just gone for the attack with Qh5! here first and White is better. 9.Qh5 h6 10.Nge2 e5 11.Rd1 exd4 12.exd4 f5 13.Bxf5 Be6 14.g4 b5 15.Kf1 b4

9...Kh8

My opponent spent nearly 40 minutes on this move. The idea is to avoid: 9...e5 10.dxe5 fxe5 11.Nxd5

10.Nf4 e6?!

10...e5 11.Qh5

11.Qh5↑

Now White has the initiative and hopefully an attack soon.

11...f5??

A natural move, and one I would play as Black myself, but instead the fish gives: 11...h6 12.g4 (12.Rd1 f5 13.Bb1 Bd7 14.h3 Qb6 15.Nce2 Ne7 16.g4 Qxb2 17.gxf5 Nxf5 18.Bxf5) 12...e5 13.Nfxd5 exd4 14.exd4 Re8+± And Black is holding on.

12.g4!→

Forgot castling was a rule here and decided to try and checkmate my opponent's king instead.

12...Nb4?! 13.Bb1 Qc7?

This way of defending was not one that

I had looked at as Black *had* to go for 12.Ne7 Ng6 instead, but here White will parry Black's attempt at counterplay while still having pressure on the kingside. 13...a5 14.a3

14.Nd3??

Regretted this move the moment I played it. You should never go take steps backward in an attack and instead look for ways to go forward. 14.a3 Nc6 15.gxf5 exf5 16.Ncxd5 Qa5+ 17.b4 Qd8 18.Bxf5 Bxf5 19.Qxf5 Ne7 20.Nxe7 Qxe7

14...Qc4?!

14...Qb6 15.Nf4 Rg8 16.gxf5 exf5 17.Nfe2 Bf8 18.Qxf7 Bh6 19.a3 Nc6 20.b4 Rf8 21.Qxd5

15.Kd2?!

Nice resource by White. The king ain't afraid of no ghosts. 15.Nf4 Bd7 16.gxf5 exf5 17.Bxf5 Bxf5 18.Qxf5 Rac8 19.a3 Qb3 20.0-0 Qxb2 21.axb4 Rxc3

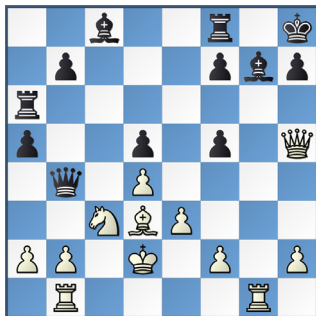
15...Nxd3?!

15...e5

16.Bxd3 Qb4 17.Rab1 a5 18.Rhg1 Ra6?

Played with less than two minutes on the clock. 18...Rg8 19.gxf5 exf5 20.a3 was better for Black; 18...h6 19.gxf5 exf5 20.Rg3 a4 21.Bxf5 Bxf5 22.Qxf5 Ra6 23.a3 Rf6 24.axb4 Rxf5 25.Ke2

19.gxf5 exf5



Position after 19...exf5

20.Rxg7!!

White now crashes though. I could've taken the rook on a6 right away, but this way is prettier and still gets the job done.

20...Kxg7 21.Bxa6 Kf6 22.Kc2

Now threatening Nxd5+. Black tried to play 22...Rd8 here but flagged just before hitting the clock. It wouldn't have mattered anyways because ...Rd8 Qh4+ wins the rook and the game for White.

1-0

Harrison Toppen-Ryan (1818) – David Arganian (2013) [E76]

72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R3), September 4, 2022
[Harrison Toppen-Ryan]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.f4?!

One of my favorite and most underrated ways to tackle the King's Indian Defense (KID). Black can get into huge trouble here if they don't know or understand the theory. Which, in most cases, they do not as this opening and line on move eight, is fairly uncommon. 5.Be2 0-0 6.Be3 Na6 7.h3 e5 8.d5 Nc5 9.Qc2 Ne8

5...0-0 6.Nf3 c5

6...Na6!?

7.d5 e6

7...b5!?

8.dxe6

A young Boris Spassky loved this variation and had several good games here as White. This move also takes a lot of KID players by surprise as: 8.Be2 exd5 9.cxd5 Re8 10.e5 dxe5 11.fxe5 Ng4 is the mainline and therefore, what most Black players are probably most prepped for.

8...Bxe6?!

This is one way to recapture, but 8.fxe6 would have been more solid and is better for Black. 8...fxe6 9.Bd3

9.Bd3 Nc6 10.f5!?

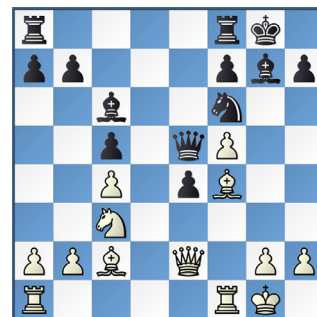
The dynamic play begins now...

10...gxf5 11.exf5 Bd7 12.0-0 Ne5 13.Bg5?!

It wasn't best to allow Nxd3 here. Instead: 13.Nxe5 dxe5 14.Bg5 Bc6 15.Bxf6 Bxf6 16.Be4 Qd4+ 17.Kh1±

13...Bc6 14.Nxe5 dxe5 15.Qe2 e4 16.Bc2 Qd4+ 17.Be3 Qe5 18.Bf4?

18.g4 h6



Position after 18.Bf4

18...Qe7?

Here I thought that 18...Qxf5 was refuted by 19.Bd6. However, the fish thinks that Black is fine afterward and has activity for the lost exchange.

19.Rae1 Rfe8 20.g4!?

Attacking on the same side of the board!? Very barbaric and creates an exciting, and vivifying game nonetheless.

20...Nd7 21.Nd5 Bxd5?

Apparently Black needs to find the computer defense: 21...Qh4 22.Bg3 Qh6 which isn't easy to commit to. (22...Bd4+ 23.Kg2 Qd8 24.Nc7 Re7 25.Kh3 Rc8 26.Nd5 Re8 27.Bh4 Nf6 28.Nxf6+)

22.cxd5 Bxb2?!

Way too greedy, now White has the initiative and attack. 22...Qh4 23.Bg3

23.g5!→ Be5?

23...Nb6 24.Kh1

24.f6! Qd6?!

24...Qf8 25.Qh5 Kh8 26.Qh3 Rad8 27.Rxe4 Qg8 28.Rfe1 Bd4+ 29.Kf1 Rxe4 30.Rxe4 Nf8 31.Qf3

25.Qxe4+-

White wins. If 25...Bd4+ 26.Qxd4!! cxd4 27.Bxd6 and White is up a whole bishop.

1-0

Michael Omori (2163) – Harrison Toppen-Ryan (1818) [D00]
72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R4), September 4, 2022
[Harrison Toppen-Ryan]

1.d4 Nf6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Bf4 e6 4.e3 Bb4 5.Bd3 c5 6.dxc5 Bxc3+?!

Here Black should instead play: 6...Nbd7 7.Nge2 a6 8.a3 Bxc5.; 6...0-0 7.Nge2 Bxc5 8.0-0 Nc6 9.Nd4 Bd7 10.Nb3 Bb6 11.Rc1

7.bxc3 Qa5 8.Bd6!

After the game, my opponent told me this was the opening trap they had studied on Chessable. It's a rare trap, but it stops Black from castling while accepting the triple pawns and a king on f1.

8...Qxc3+ 9.Kf1! Nbd7?!

9...Qa5 10.Ne2 b6 11.Rb1 Ba6 12.cxb6 axb6 13.Rb3 Bxd3 14.cxd3 Na6 15.Ra3 Qb5 16.h4

10.Ne2 Qa5 11.Nd4?!

11.Rb1 was best.

11...a6??

Here I got scared because if ...Nxc5 then Nb5. But the fish likes to yell at me and instead says: 11...Nxc5 12.Nb5?? (12.Nb3) 12...Nxd3 13.Nc7+ (13.Qxd3 Ne4 14.Nc7+ Kd8) 13...Kd7! 14.cxd3 Kxd6 15.Nxa8 Bd7

12.Nb3?!

White is now better here and it's up to Black to try and wiggle out of this mess.

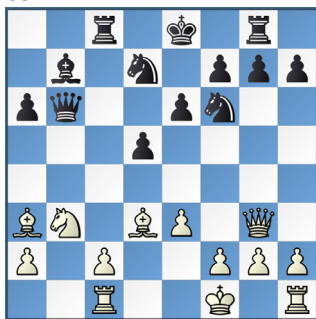
12...Qd8 13.Qf3 b6 14.cxb6 Qxb6 15.Ba3 Bb7 16.Qg3 Rg8?!

16...h5

17.Rc1?!

17.Ke2! connecting the rook and keeping them more flexible.; 17.Rb1 e5 18.f3 Bc6 19.Kf2 Bb5 20.Rhe1 g5 21.Kg1 h5 22.Bf5 Rc8 23.Qf2 Rc6

17...Rc8



Position after 17...Rc8

18.Qd6?!

Now I was happy that I can at least get the queens off. The bishop on d6 still causes me problems.

18...Qxd6 19.Bxd6 Ne4 20.Bb4 f5 21.Na5 Nec5 22.Nxb7?! Nxb7?!

22...Nxd3 23.Nd6+ Kd8 24.Ba5+ Ke7 25.Nxc8+ Rxc8 26.Rd1 Nb2 27.Rd2 e5± was really hard to go for as Black despite the fish saying this was Black's best try.

23.Bxa6 Rc7 24.Bb5?!

24.Ke2 Kf7

24...Kf7 25.a4 Ra8 26.c3?!

26.Ra1 Nf6

26...Ndc5!

Going after a4. Black needs to get that pawn off ASAP.

27.Ke2 Nxa4 28.Ra1 Nb6? 29.Rxa8 Nxa8 30.Ra1! Nb6 31.Ra7?

31.Ra6 was apparently better, but I'm still not too sure as to why.

31...Nc8!

Now Black can defend without much issue, despite White having 'The double bishop-pair' vs Black's knight pair.

32.Ra8?!

32.Ra6 Nc5 33.Bxc5 Rxc5 34.Bd7 Ke7 35.Bxe6 Nd6 36.Bg8 Rxc3 37.Bxd5 Rc2+ 38.Ke1 Rb2

32...Ncd6 33.Bd3 Kf6 34.Ra7 Rc6 35.f3 Nc5 36.Bc2 Nc4 37.Bb1 Nd6 38.Bc2 Nc4

½-½

Eniie Qiao (1522) – Neel Borate (1180) [E06]
72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R6), September 5, 2022
[Neel Borate]

1.c4

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6; 1.e4

1...e6

1...e5 2.Nc3 Nf6

2.g3

In a way I was expecting 2.d4 because it would lead to the Queen's Gambit, which could be easier to play in this situation. 2.d4 d5

2...d5 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.d4 Be7 5.Nc3

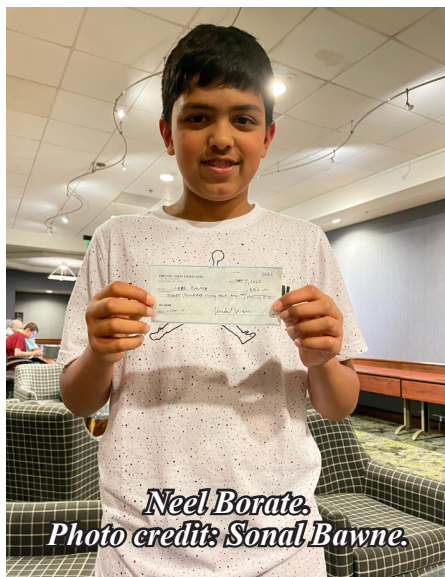
Closed Catalan. 5.Nf3 dxc4 6.Qc2 (6.Nbd2 b5 7.Ne5)

5...0-0

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Neel Borate
Photo credit: Sonal Bayne.

Here I think that if White had played slightly differently, I would be having a very hard time with my light-squared bishop.

6.Bg5?!

6.Nf3! It still is equal, but White is doing better here. 6...c6 7.0-0 Nbd7 8.Nd2 b6 9.e4 White controls lots of space. Black isn't losing, but I feel slightly uncomfortable in this situation because of how unactive my pieces are. 9...dxe4 10.Ndxe4 Nxe4 11.Nxe4±

6...c6?

Not a losing move, but I could have won a free pawn with 6...dxc4 7.Nf3 Bd7 8.Ne5 Bc6 9.Nxc6 Nxc6 wins a free pawn.: 6...c5 7.dxc5 Bxc5 (7...d4 8.Nb5 Bxc5) 8.cxd5

7.e3

Traps the bishop in that small area. I don't like this move.

7...h6

Bishop for knight trading.

8.Bxf6 Bxf6 9.cxd5

9.e4 dxe4 10.Nxe4

9...exd5 10.Nge2 Bf5

I like my position here because of how comfortable it is.

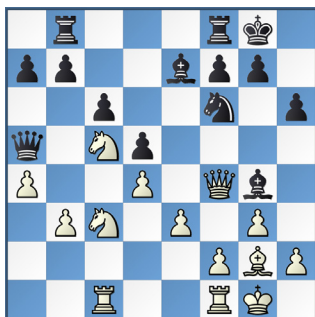
11.0-0 Nd7 12.Rc1 Nb6 13.b3±

This move creates holes. My dark squared bishop has some annoying ideas for White.

13...Be7 14.a4 Nd7 15.Nf4 Qa5 16.Nd3 Nf6

16...Ba3 17.Ra1?? Unfortunately, White would play 17...Rc2 instead. (17.Rc2 Here White has some annoying pins though, however. 17...Bb4 18.Nxb4 Bxc2 19.Nxc2 Qxc3) 17...Bxd3 18.Qxd3 Bb2

17.Nc5 Rab8 18.Qf3??-+ 18...Bg4 19.Qf4



Position after 19.Qf4

19...Rfd8??

Black isn't losing, just that there was a much, much better move available to play. 19...g5 20.Qe5 Qd8!!-+ The only way to trap White's queen.

20.e4 dxe4=

20...Bxc5 21.dxc5 dxe4 22.Nxe4 Nxe4

23.Bxe4 Be6 Comfy position for Black.

21.N3xe4 Bh5 22.Nxf6+ Bxf6 23.g4??-+

23.h4 Bxd4 24.Nd7

23...Bg5

I'm very surprised that my opponent didn't see this move. At the time, I thought that I could do multiple cool tricks, but I really only had this one.

24.Qe4 Bxc1 25.Rxc1 Bg6 26.Qe7

I had about 13 minutes on the clock here, and my opponent had about 30 minutes. And I thought for about ten minutes on this move, but then I knew exactly how to win.

26...Re8! 27.Qd6 Rbd8 28.Qf4 Re1+ 29.Rxe1 Qxe1+ 30.Bf1 b6! 31.Nb7??

31.Qe3 White's best option.

31...Bd3 32.Kg2 Bxf1+

I should have taken with the queen, but I guess the time pressure got to me on that one.

33.Kg3 Qc3+ 34.f3?! Qe1#

0-1

**Conner Jensen (1654) –
Mauricio Rodriguez-Melendez [B11]**
72nd Oregon Open
Portland, OR (R5), September 5, 2022
[Wilson Gibbins]

Conner has a history of playing clutch chess when there is a section prize on the line — see his games on pages 11 and 12 of the January 2022 edition of *Northwest Chess* for more examples.

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 Bg4 4.h3 Bxf3 5.Qxf3 e6 6.d3 Nf6 7.g3

Bobby Fischer played this position five times in 1959 Candidates tournament but played it only once outside of that

tournament, against Ray Weinstein in 1959. One can understand the attraction of this variation—White obtains the two bishops and a King’s Indian Reversed-type position. But one can also understand why he never played it again, as he obtained only one win in the six games. Against Soviet Grandmasters Keres and Petrosian, he scored three losses and a draw. The draw against Petrosian was featured in his book *My 60 Memorable Games*, known as the “Four Queens” game.

7...Nbd7 8.Bg2 d4 9.Nb1!±

The move 9.Ne2? looks more natural to me. But Black can play 9...Qa5+! which gives him an advantage, as after 10.Bd2 Bb4 11.c3? (11.Qf4 e5± minimizes the damage but is still better for Black.) 11...Ne5! wins White’s queen. One of the negative aspects of my “natural” 9.Ne2? is that it blocks the retreat squares for White’s queen.

9...Ne5 10.Qe2

Conner uses the retreat square that he left available by retreating his knight to b1 on move nine.

10...Bb4+ 11.Nd2

And he uses that knight to interpose on d2 so he doesn’t have to relinquish his advantage of the two bishops.

11...0-0 12.f4 Ned7 13.0-0 Re8 14.g4

And White has an excellent King’s Indian Attack position.

14...Nf8 15.g5 Bxd2 16.Bxd2 N6d7 17.Rf3 Ng6 18.Qf2 Ndf8 19.Rf1 f5

Trying to put a roadblock in front of the attack, but

20.gxf6!

Opens the position. Grabbing space with 20.e5? = just slows the attack down.

20...Qxf6 21.Rg3 e5 22.f5 Nf4

Best. 22...Ne7? 23.Bg5 Qd6 24.f6 and Black’s kingside is cracking with White’s major pieces aimed at the wreckage.

23.Kh2

White chooses to work around Black’s knight instead of winning a pawn by taking it with his bishop. Black’s knight is unlikely to leave the f4-square, as it is currently responsible for stopping White from playing Bg5 followed by f5–f6 after Black’s queen moves away. So White will probably be able to take the pawn later if he changes his mind. White can win a pawn with 23.Bxf4 exf4 24.Qxf4 but Black may be able to set up a dark-square defense with 24...Nd7 followed by 25...Ne5 if possible.

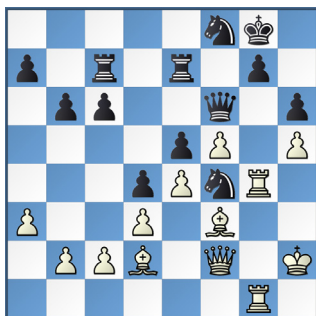
23...Nd7

This knight ready to jump into the e5-square should White take the knight on f4. Both players agree that the bishop on g2 is worth less than Black’s knight on f4.

24.Rg1 Re7 25.Rg4 Rc8 26.h4 Nf8 27.h5 h6

27...Nxb5? 28.Bg5

28.Bf3 Rcc7 29.a3 b6



Position after 29...b6

30.Rxf4!?

Creative and fun, though not the only way

to exploit White’s advantage. Since White gains a tempo with the bishop attack on Black’s rook on c7 and the knight no longer on d7, Black doesn’t have enough time to set up the knight blockade on e5. Stockfish suggests trading queens 30.Qh4 Qxh4+ 31.Rxh4 Nd7 and then combining the pawn win on f4 with improving the position of White’s king. 32.Kg3 Re8 33.Bxf4 exf4+ 34.Kxf4 and calls this +3.5. But after blockading with 34...Ne5 as Black, I’d be relieved to be in this position as compared to the attack that he faces in the game.

30...exf4 31.Bxf4 Rcd7 32.Qg3 Nh7 33.Bg4 Qf8 34.e5

White’s mobile pawns and pair of bishops combined with the major piece battery aimed at Black’s king means the defense won’t be much fun. And there are no open files for Black’s rooks to create counterplay.

34...Rd5 35.f6 Nxf6 36.exf6 Qxf6

Material is formally equal and Black has some open files for the rooks. But the bishops are too strong. White is winning.

37.Rg2 Rf7 38.Rf2 Qe7 39.Re2 Qf6 40.Be5 Rxe5

40...Qg5 41.Be6; 40...Qe7 41.Bxg7; 40...Qf1 41.Rg2 (41.Be6?? Qxe2+) 41...Kf8 42.Be6 among others.

41.Rxe5 Qf2+ 42.Qxf2 Rxf2+ 43.Kg3 Rxc2 44.Re2

Once again, the formal material count is deceiving. Black is down “only” a bishop for two pawns, but the ending is easily won for White, as Black’s extra pawns cannot be converted to passed pawns or exchanged to a drawn R+B vs. R ending.

44...Rc1 45.Kf4 Kf7 46.Ke5 c5 47.Kd6 Rg1 48.Bf5 Kf6 49.Bg6 Rg3 50.Kd5

1–0

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FANTASTIC FIDE TITLES

AND WHERE TO FIND THEM

JOSEPH LEVINE

The rating systems of the chess world can seem very complicated, but it is important to understand each system and the corresponding titles. The local rating system is the Northwest Scholastic Rating System (NWSRS), used in local and state scholastic tournaments. These tournaments almost exclusively award trophies, not money. This rating system has no titles.

The second rating system is the US Chess (US Chess Federation) rating, which is used across the US, including scholastic tournaments outside of the Pacific Northwest. A local tournament can be dual rated (both NWSRS and US Chess) and US Chess will almost always be used for pairings. The rating classes in descending order for US Chess are Senior master (2400+), National Master (2200+), Expert (2000-2199), and then letter classes A (1800-1999), B (1600-1799), C (1400-1599), and D (0-1399). Large national tournaments with multiple sections typically have a 200-point difference between sections, corresponding to the US Chess rating classes. US Chess awards National Master, Life Master, and Senior Life Master titles.

Finally, FIDE is the international governing body of chess. Large open sections in US tournaments are usually FIDE rated and US Chess rated. Because FIDE is an international system, it also has the best known and most coveted titles. These are Candidate Master (2200), FIDE Master (2300), International Master (2400), and the prestigious Grandmaster title (2500). FIDE also has women's versions of each of these titles (WGM, WIM, WFM, WCM), which are earned for 200 fewer points, although women can still earn the general titles as well. FIDE

rating points are generally considered harder to achieve than US Chess, so the rule of thumb is that most players' US Chess rating is 100 points higher than their FIDE rating.

FIDE's titles are more complicated than US Chess'. Some FIDE titles, including Grandmaster, require norms. A norm is a required standard of performance achieved at a qualifying tournament. The top FIDE titles (GM, IM, WGM, and WIM) require three norms in addition to achieving the required rating. Norms can be awarded for winning National or International youth tournaments, but most norms are earned at tournaments meeting the criteria below:

- four foreign federation opponents out of nine rounds
- at least three opponents of the same or higher title as the norm (e.g., for an IM norm, at least three opponents need to be IMs or GMs)
- at least five FIDE titled opponents at or above FM or WFM
- an average opponent rating of at least 2030 (WIM), 2180 (WGM), 2230 (IM), or 2380 (GM)
- a performance rating of at least 2250 (WIM), 2400 (WGM), 2450 (IM), or 2600 (GM)
- officiated by a FIDE certified arbiter

Once you earn all three norms and achieve the necessary rating, you will be awarded the appropriate title. Finding norm tournaments is very difficult, though, because there needs to be enough high-rated players and foreign players, and the pairings need to work in your favor, to meet the requirements above. Adding to the difficulty, norm tournaments are

often quite expensive for norm seekers and regular players. To facilitate the attendance of foreign players and GMs/IMs, the tournament organizer may pay travel expenses and/or waive entry fees, expenses that are then passed along to the other players. Another barrier for those of us in the Northwest is that most norms tournaments are found on the east coast, with the notable exception of norm tournaments run by the PNWCC.

I've had to learn all about norms and FIDE rules lately because I am trying to get to International Master, which requires three IM norms. I got my first IM norm in the Hollywood Norm Classic #3 tournament, August 2-7, in Los Angeles. This tournament was run by Rushaan Mahajan and Josiah Stearman, under their new organization 1000gm.org. Rushaan is a Seattle chess player in tenth grade and also a National Master. Their tournaments don't charge entry fees and provide a great opportunity for up-and-coming players to earn IM and GM norms. 1000gm is a non-profit organization with the mission "to create an ecosystem to generate and financially sustain 1000 Grandmasters in USA" – a nearly 10x increase in the number of US GMs.

The Hollywood Norm tournament had 42 players, with 18 from foreign federations, eight GMs, nine IMs, and an overall average FIDE rating of 2302. With the help of some lucky pairings, I got to play six of the eight GMs. I finished with a score of 5/9, including beating three GMs. My performance rating worked out perfectly, as I needed a performance rating of 2450 for an IM norm and that is exactly what I got! Here is my best game of the tournament, a win against GM Tsegmed Batchuluun, who is 2505 FIDE from Mongolia!

**Tsegmed Batchuluun (2478) –
Joseph Levine (2254) [D35]**
Hollywood Chess Norm
Classic Swiss Invitational
Los Angeles, CA (R3), August 4, 2022
[Joseph Levine]

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.cxd5 exd5
5.Bg5 c6 6.e3 Bd6 7.Bd3 0-0 8.Nf3 Re8
9.0-0 Nbd7 10.Qc2 Nf8 11.Rae1 Bg4
12.Ne5

So far he has played all his moves very quickly. Ne5 caught me off guard; I thought this was just a free pawn, but White has compensation.

12...Bxe5 13.dxe5 Rxe5 14.f4

White's point! After f5 my bishop is trapped.

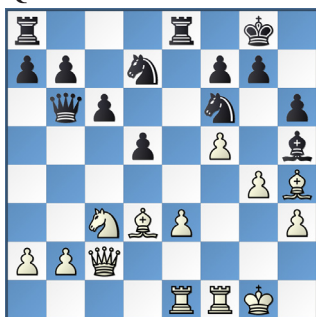
14...Re8

I thought about 14...Rxc5 but didn't like 15.fxg5 N6d7 and 16.h4, but the computer thinks that is best, +0.2.

15.f5 h6 16.Bh4 Bh5 17.h3 N8d7

I initially planned to play 17...Qb6 instead, with the idea that 18.Bf2 Qc7 19.g4 Bxc4 is fine for me. However, I missed Na4 when I just have to go back.

18.g4 Qb6



Position after 18...Qb6

19.Na4

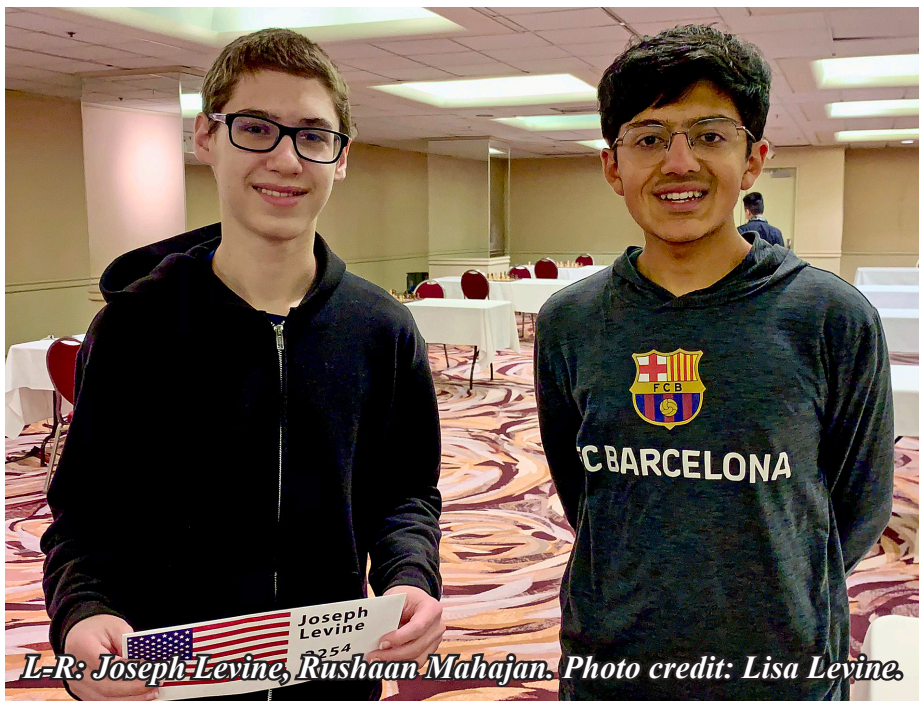
Instead of this, 19.gxh5 immediately was stronger. If 19...Nxh5, White has f6. I was planning after 19.gxh5 to play 19...Rxe3 20.Bf2 Rxe1 21.Bxb6 Rxf1+ 22.Kxf1 and 22...axb6, with a losing position, but it's still tricky to actually win for White.

19...Qa5 20.gxh5 c5

Although this is still objectively winning for White, this is really difficult to play. My pawns are moving forward, and he can't easily attack my king.

21.Qd1 b5 22.Nc3 b4 23.Na4 Kh8

23...c4 here was also ok, but I thought that after 23...c4 24.Bc2 and then 24...Kh8 he



L-R: Joseph Levine, Rushaan Mahajan. Photo credit: Lisa Levine.

had 25.Qd4 which was quite strong.

24.b3 Ne5 25.Bc2 Rad8

All my pieces have activated, and I have a lot of strong options, like ...d4-d3 or ...c4. We are both relatively low on time at this point.

26.Bxf6??

A big blunder. My knight was never going to move because of f6, and his bishop could have been useful on g3 or f2. This also opened the g-file for me. Better options were Kh1 or Qe2/d2.

26...gxf6 27.Kh1 Qc7 28.Rg1 Qc6 29.Rg2

According to the computer, 29.e4 dxe4 30.Bxe4 was the only winning plan for White here, because after 30...Rxd1 31.Bxc6 Rxe1 32.Rxe1 the knight is pinned.

29...d4 30.exd4

30.e4 was better.

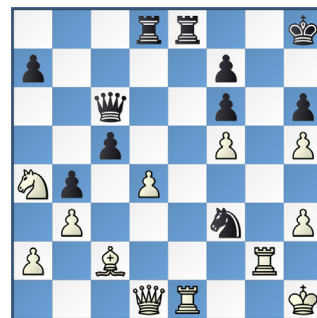
30...Nf3!

[Diagram top of next column]

All of a sudden, my pieces activate, and he is in serious trouble. If 31.Rxe8+ Rxe8 32.d5 I have ...Qxd5!!

31.Rf1

Apparently only 31.d5! kept advantage for White, and after 31...Qxd5 White can



Position after 30...Nf3

play 32.Rf1, and ...Nh4 doesn't work because of the queen trade.

31...Nh4 32.d5

32.Qg4 was the only holding move as it forced trades on g2. If 32.Qg4 Rg8 33.Be4 is winning.

32...Rxd5 33.Qg4 Nxc2 34.Qxc2 Rg8 35.Qf3 Qd6 36.Qf4 Qxf4 37.Rxf4

After the queen trade I have a winning position because his pieces are so misplaced, and his pawn structure is really bad.

37...Rd2 38.Be4 c4

A useful final touch as I create a passed pawn that will ultimately win one of his pieces.

39.bxc4 Rxa2 40.Nc5 Rc8 41.Nd7 Rd8 42.Bc6 b3 43.Rf1 b2

0-1

Washington Women's Championship

Josh Sinanan

The 2022 Washington Women's Championship took place in person at the Orlov Chess Academy in Seattle from September 9-11. Female chess players from throughout Washington State were represented in the 17-player field from cities including Mercer Island, Redmond, Seattle, Richland, Kirkland, Woodinville, Bellevue, Sammamish, and Bothell! The event was hosted by the Washington

Chess Federation and organized by President Josh Sinanan. WCF Scholastic Director Rekha Sagar flew up from San Diego to direct the five-round Swiss tournament over the course of two-and-a-half days. As usual, the magnificent Meiling Cheng was on-site to take pictures while her daughter Selina was playing in the tournament. Even Karen Schmidt, *Northwest Chess* columnist, stopped by for a visit on Saturday afternoon!

WFM Chouchan Airapetian (4.5, 1988 → 1985), a popular chess coach based in Mercer Island and the WCF Director of Chess for Women and Girls, emerged victorious with an undefeated 4.5 points from five games, allowing just one draw against the solid Varnika Jammalamadaka in round three. Airapetian won convincingly in the last round on the white side of a Spanish against co-leader Angela Chen, who started off the tournament with back-to-back forfeit wins due to her opponents not showing up!

Chouchan played in the US Women's Championship several times in early 2000s and these days teaches and promotes chess on the Eastside. For her victory, Chouchan receives the title of 2022 Washington State Women's Champion and is seeded into the Premier section of the 2023 Washington State Championship. Congratulations Chouchan! Four players tied for second/third/U1800/U1600 honors a full point back with 3.5 points apiece: WCM Mary Kuhner (3.5, 1830 → 1808) from Seattle, Varnika Jammalamadaka (3.5, 1506 → 1525) from Redmond, Angela Chen (3.5, 1452 → 1486) from Seattle, and Laya Mohan (3.5, 911 → 1086) from Bothell. Local star Selina Cheng (3.0, 1081 → 1158) from Detective Cookie's Chess Club in Seattle won the U1400 prize with an impressive 3 points. Neha Kulkarni (2.5, unrated → 1201) from Kirkland, who played in her first tournament last May at the Washington Open, captured the first U1000/unrated prize with an even 2.5 points. Deeksha Shankaranand (1.0, 862 → 820) from Redmond earned the first U1200 prize with one point. Congratulations to the winners, and many thanks to all the wonderful ladies and girls who contributed to this special event!



*Chouchan Airapetian playing Black vs Iris Zhang during round two of the Washington Women's Championship.
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

Washington Women's Championship

#	Name	Rating	Rd 1	Rd 2	Rd 3	Rd 4	Rd 5	Total
1	Chouchanik Airapetian	1988	W10	W7	D3	W6	W4	4.5
2	Mary Kuhner	1880	W5	W14	D4	D3	D6	3.5
3	Varnika Jammalamadaka	1713	W15	W8	D1	D2	D5	3.5
4	Angela Chen	1594	X19	X17	D2	W7	L1	3.5
5	Laya Mohan	1293	L2	W18	W10	W14	D3	3.5
6	Lily Deng	1778	D11	W9	W13	L1	D2	3
7	Iris Zhang	1582	W16	L1	W8	L4	W9	3
8	Selina Cheng	1339	W12	L3	L7	W15	W14	3
9	Sonia Devaraju	1589	H---	L6	W11	W13	L7	2.5
10	Aashi Mathur	1389	L1	W16	L5	D12	W18	2.5
11	Zoe Xu	1289	D6	L13	L9	W16	B---	2.5
12	Neha Kulkarni	unr.	L8	W15	L14	D10	W16	2.5
13	Shuyi Han	1591	H---	W11	L6	L9	H---	2
14	Haituka Anandkumar	1483	W18	L2	W12	L5	L8	2
15	Angela Aгаian	1213	L3	L12	W18	L8	H---	1.5
16	Deeksha Shankaranand	1184	L7	L10	B---	L11	L12	1
17	Niharika Vutukuri	718	B---	F4	U---	U---	U---	1
18	Audrie Eloise Gordon	unr.	L14	L5	L15	B---	L10	1
19	Hasini Juluri	1208	F4	U---	U---	U---	U---	0



*Mary Kuhner playing Black vs Lily Deng during the final round of the Washington Women's Championship.
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*



*(L) Lily Deng vs Shuyi Han and the other middle boards at the start of round three.
Photo Credit: Meiling Cheng.*

A Northwest Chess Grand Prix Event



Washington Class Championships

Fri-Sun, November 25-27, 2022

\$12,000 Prize Fund

(based on 150 paid entries)

Format: A 6-round Swiss event across 7 class sections. Sections may be combined if less than 12 players in a section.

Per-Section Entry Fees (by Oct 28 / Nov 11 / on-site) **& Prizes:**

- **Master (2200+)** EF \$170 / \$180 / \$190
Prizes: \$700, \$450, \$350; U2300 \$250, \$200
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Prizes: \$600, \$350, \$250; U2100 \$200, \$150
- **Class A (1800-1999)** EF \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$500, \$300, \$200; U1900 \$170, \$125
- **Class B (1600-1799)** EF \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$500, \$300, \$200; U1700 \$170, \$125
- **Class C (1400-1599)** EF \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$500, \$300, \$200; U1500 \$170, \$125
- **Class D (1200-1399)** EF \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$500, \$300, \$200; U1300 \$170, \$125
- **Class E (1199 & Under)** EF \$150 / \$160 / \$170
Prizes: \$500, \$300, \$200; U1000 \$170, \$125; U800 \$100, \$50; Unrated \$100

Highest finishing WA resident in the Master, Expert, Class A, and Class B sections seeded into the 2023 WA State Championship, in the Championship, Premier, Invitational, and Challengers sections, respectively.

Mixed Doubles Prizes: Best male-female 2-player team combined score among all sections: \$300-\$200-\$100. Avg team rating must be under 2000; may play in different sections. Register (no extra fee) before both players begin round 2. Players may win Mixed Doubles prizes in addition to other prizes.

Special Prizes (per class section):

Best Female Player: \$50. Awarded to the highest finishing female per class who does not win another cash prize. Requires min 3 qualifying players per class.

Best Annotated Game: \$50, \$25, 1-yr NWC ext. Submit one annotated game from the event that you consider to be interesting or well-played. A panel of judges will select the winners.

Redmond Marriott

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Hotel Info/Rates: Seattle Marriott Redmond, \$119 one King or two Queen Beds, single or double occupancy. Call (425) 498-4000 to request the Washington Chess Federation block. Group Booking Code: WCNWCNR. Cut-off date for [discounted reservations](#) is Nov 4, 2022.

Entry Fees: Rated players add \$85 if wanting to play up one class only. (Playing up two classes is not permitted.) Seniors (age 50+) please subtract \$50. Free entry to GMs, IMs, and WGMs. Reentry for ½ of original entry fee. Canadians may pay C\$ at par for entry fee.

Info: Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206-769-3757,
WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Health/Safety: All players and parents (if U18) are required to sign the [WCF Health / Safety Protocols & Waiver of Liability](#) form prior to the start of the tournament.

Main Event:

Note: The overall schedule is designed so that you can play in the Main Event *and* in several of the Side Events (see next page for details) with minimum half-point byes!

Registration & Payment:

Before event: nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration/ (pay by credit/debit/PayPal) or make checks payable to Washington Chess Federation.

On-site: Fri 9-10 AM for 3-day schedule, or 4-5 PM if entering with 1 half-point bye. Sat 8-8:30 AM for 2-day schedule, or 9-10 AM if entering 3-day schedule with 2 half-point byes. *Late registrations may receive a half-point bye for round 1.* Two half-point byes available; if interested, request before end of round 2. Play any 2 days, if taking 2 half-point byes.

Rating: Dual rated US Chess and NWSRS. Master/Expert/Class A/Class B sections also FIDE rated (except G/60 games). Higher of US Chess Regular or Online (Nov 1st supplement), FIDE, and NWSRS ratings used to determine class sections, pairings, and prizes. Higher of US Chess and foreign ratings used at TD discretion; foreign ratings used for players with no US Chess rating. Unrated players eligible only for 1st / 2nd / 3rd prizes in Master section or the Unrated prize in Class E section.

Rounds: 3-day schedule: Fri 11 AM & 6 PM, Sat 11 AM & 6 PM, Sun 10 AM & 4 PM. 2-day: Sat 9 AM, 11:45 AM, 2:30 PM, then join 3-day schedule from round 4 at 6 PM.

Time Controls: 3-day schedule: 40/120, SD/30 with a 10-second increment per move. Late default: 60 minutes. 2-day schedule: G/60 with a 10-second increment (rounds 1-3); rounds 4-6 same as 3-day schedule.

Miscellaneous: Current US Chess membership and WCF/OCF/ICA membership required in all sections. Other states accepted. Memberships may be paid at time of registration. US Chess Grand Prix Points: 40. US Chess Junior Grand Prix. No Computers. Wheelchair accessible. All equipment is provided. Please bring a digital clock, if available.

Washington Class Championships, Nov. 25-27 (cont'd)

Fun Side Events!

Thanksgiving Scholastic

Fri, 11/25 at 9:15 AM (during round 1)

This event is a *WA State Elementary Qualifier!*

Establish or update your rating!

Format: A 5-round Swiss tournament in 4 sections: K-3 U800, K-3 Open, 4-12 U900, 4-12 Open. Play-up allowed into Open sections.

Eligibility: Open to all K-12 students; grade is based on 2022/23 school year.

Entry Fee: \$45 if registered by 11/18, \$55 after. Room for max 90 players – register early!

Time Control: G/25; d5.

Awards: Amazon Gift Cards in each section: 1st \$100, 2nd \$90, 3rd \$80.

Special Prizes (per section): Medals for first-timers, best female player (by TPR), and biggest upset.

Rounds: 9:15 AM, 10:30, 11:45, lunch, 1:30 PM, and 2:45 PM. Awards ceremony 4 PM or ASAP.

Rating: Highest of Nov 2022 supplement US Chess / US Chess Online, or current NWSRS rating used to determine section and prizes.

Registration: 100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline: Wed, 11/23 @ 5 PM. Unpaid players will be withdrawn from the event.

Carol Kleist Memorial Adult Swiss

Sponsored by the Seattle Chess Club, with generous support from Henry Yan.

Fri-Sun, 11/25-27 at 11 AM & 4 PM

Format: A 6-round Swiss in one section.

Time Control: G/90; +30.

Entry Fee: \$60 online (by Thu, 11/24 @ 5 PM) or \$70 onsite. Entry fee waived for new unrated players who purchase memberships.

Registration: Fri 10:00-10:30 AM (unless entering with half-point byes). Current US Chess membership and WCF/OCF/ICA membership required.

Rounds: Fri 11 AM & 4 PM, Sat 11 AM & 4 PM, Sun 11 AM & 4 PM. 2 half-point byes available; if interested, request before end of round 2.

Rating: US Chess only rated. Higher of Nov 2022 US Chess / US Chess Online ratings used to determine pairings and prizes.

Prize fund: \$1,000 (guaranteed). 1st \$200, 2nd \$150, 3rd \$110, 1st U2000 / U1700 / U1400 / U1100 or Unrated \$90, Biggest upset: \$90, Best Female player (by TPR): \$90.

WA Class Puzzle Solving Championship

Fri, 11/25 at 5 PM (between rounds 1 and 2)

Format: Solve 15 chess puzzles in 45 minutes. Solutions to be written on paper. Evaluation based on both accuracy and completeness.

Registration: 4:00-4:45 PM. Entry fee: \$10. No memberships required.

Awards: Medals awarded to top-3 overall finishers and to the best puzzle solver in each class: U2000, U1700, U1400, & Unrated.

WA Class 3rd Annual Chess Workshop for Girls & Women

Fri, 11/25 at 6 PM (during round 2)

Format: Workshop led by WFM Chouchan Airapetian (chornyaa@msn.com, 206-914-4252), experienced chess coach, organizer, and promoter; former US Women's Championship contender; WCF Women's and Girl's Chess Director.

Registration: 5:45-6:00 PM. Entry fee: Free!

Schedule: 6PM-7PM - "How to develop & cultivate women's and girls' chess." 7PM-8PM - Q&A, complementary pizza & refreshments, and ladies' bughouse.

WA Class "WaldowChess" Championship

Sat, 11/26 at 9 AM (before round 3)

Format: 4-round Swiss in one section. Unrated. Time control: G/10; +3.

Description: Play begins with White to move having already played e4 and d4. In return for this handicap, Black receives draw odds!

Registration: 8:30-8:45 AM. Entry fee: \$20. No memberships required.

Rounds: 9 AM, 9:30, 10:00, and 10:30AM. 1 half-point bye available; request by end of round 2.

Prize Fund: \$150/b10. 1st \$40, 2nd \$30, 3rd \$20, 1st U2000/U1700/U1400/Unr \$15.

WA Class Chess960 (Fischer Random) Championship

Sat, 11/26 at 4 PM (between rounds 3 and 4)

Format: 4-round Swiss in one section. Unrated. Time control: G/10; +3.

Registration: 3:30-3:45 PM. Entry fee: \$20. No memberships required.

Rounds: 4 PM, 4:30, 5:00, and 5:30 PM. 1 half-point bye available; request by end of round 2.

Prize Fund: \$300/b20. 1st \$80, 2nd \$60, 3rd \$40, 1st U2000/U1700/U1400/Unr \$30.

WA Class G/45 Championship

Sun, 11/27 at 1:30 PM (during round 6)

Format: 4-round Swiss in one section. Dual rated - US Chess and NWSRS. Time control: G/45; +5.

Registration: 12:30-1:15 PM. Entry fee: \$25 online by Sat, 11/26 (or \$30 on-site). Current US Chess and WCF/OCF/ICA memberships required.

Rounds: 1:30 PM, 3:15, 5:00, and 6:45 PM. 1 half-point bye available; request by end of round 2.

Prize Fund: \$400/b20. 1st \$100, 2nd \$80, 3rd \$60, 1st U2000/U1700/U1400/Unr \$40.

WA Class "Knight Time" Blitz

Sun, 11/27 at 8:30 PM (after round 6)

Format: 7-round Swiss in one section. US Chess Blitz rated. Time control: G/5; +2.

Registration: 8:00-8:15 PM. Entry fee: \$25 online by Sat, 11/26 (or \$30 on-site).

Current US Chess and WCF/OCF/ICA memberships required.

Rounds: 8:30 PM, 8:45, 9:00, 9:15, 9:30, 9:45, 10:00 PM. 2 half-point byes available; request by end of round 2.

Prize Fund: \$400/b20. 1st \$100, 2nd \$80, 3rd \$60, 1st U2000/U1700/U1400/U1100 or Unr \$40.

CHALLENGER'S CUP SCHOLASTIC CHESS TOURNAMENT

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2022

CHINOOK MIDDLE SCHOOL

2001 98TH AVE NE, BELLEVUE, WA 98004



FORMAT

A 5-round, G/25; d5 Swiss tournament in five sections:

K-1 U800

2-3 U800

K-3 Open

4-8 U900

4-12 Open

Play-up into Open sections is allowed.

SCHEDULE

Rd. 1 – 9:00am

Rd. 2 – 10:30am

Lunch break

Rd. 3 – 12:00pm

Rd. 4 – 1:15pm

Rd. 5 – 2:30pm

Awards Presentation at 4pm.

ELIGIBILITY

Open to all students registered in grades K-12 as of the 2022-2023 school year. Out-of-state players welcome!

ENTRY FEE

\$45 by 11/5, \$55 after.

Room for 200 players.

AWARDS

Section Prizes: Amazon E-Gift Cards awarded in each section:

1st \$90, 2nd \$80, 3rd \$70, 4th \$60, 5th \$50

Special Prizes (per section): Medals for first-time players, best female player, and biggest upset. *Top player (by TPR) in the K-3 Open and 4-12 Open sections each win free entry into the 2022 WA Class Championships!*

RATING

NWSRS Rated. Open sections also US Chess Rated – establish or update your national rating! Highest of November supplement US Chess Regular/US Chess Online, or current NWSRS rating used to determine section and pairings.

TIME CONTROL

Game in 25 minutes with a 5-second delay. In the Open sections, some clocks will be provided and used from the start – set to 25 minutes with a 5 second per move delay. If you have your own clock please bring it. In the Under sections, clocks will not be used from the start, but will be placed on the boards after 40 minutes of play, and set to 10 minutes per player with no delay.

THE DETAILS

US Chess membership required for the 2 Open sections (harder) – these will be dual rated, both NWSRS and USCF. The U800 and U900 sections (easier) will be NWSRS rated only – US Chess membership not required for those.

ONLINE REGISTRATION

NWchess.com/OnlineRegistration/

Pay by Credit/Debit/PayPal. **100% pre-registered, no on-site entries or payments. Entry + payment deadline Nov 11th @ 5:00pm.** Unpaid players will be immediately withdrawn from the tournament.

Health/Safety Protocols: Face masks optional for players and spectators. If interested, please bring your own mask. All players and spectators are required to sign the [WCF Health/Safety Protocols & Waiver of Liability](#) form prior to the start of the tournament.

Lunch and refreshments will be available to purchase on-site.

WA State Elementary Qualifier!

Questions? Contact Rekha Sagar, WCF Scholastic Director, 425-496-9160, rekha4chess@gmail.com

So, you think Boise, Idaho, is a laid back, fun place to visit, but you wouldn't be caught dead here? Really! Come to Boise, December 16-18, 2022, for the largest tournament in Northwest Chess history (not counting U.S. Chess Federation events) Play like your life depended on it by winning the \$15,725:

MexInsurance[®] FIDE Open.

The organizers promise to send a nice letter to your next of kin.



4049 S. Eckert Road, Boise, Idaho 83716

Elite Section is open to all. Reserve Section Under 2200 and below. The Elite and Reserve sections are both FIDE rated.

6-SS; 40/90,SD/30;+30 Rounds: 12:15 p.m., 5 p.m.

The \$10,000 Elite Prizes Unconditionally Guaranteed:

\$2,500, \$2,000, \$1,500, \$1,000, \$750, \$500, \$400, \$375, \$350, \$325, \$300

Reserve Prizes based on 100 Paid Entries: \$5,725

U2200: \$375, \$325, \$300; U2000: \$375, \$325, \$300; U1800: \$300, \$200, \$100; U1600: \$300, \$200, \$100; U1400 to U600: \$200, \$100, \$50 per class; Unrated: \$150, \$125, \$100. Unrated players will play in the Elite Section with an assigned rating of 2199.

Top Woman \$200; Top Senior over 65 years \$200

GM → WCMs play for free and take home 100% of their earnings. To register contact George at chandraalexischessclub@gmail.com before 12/15

Elite or Reserve sections: MexInsurance.com FIDE Open – Chandra Alexis Chess Club

The entry fee for these sections is a flat \$100. Registration closes at 8 p.m. Mtn, December 15, 2022

There is no on-site registration. No exceptions.

Please bring a chess set, board, digital clock and a pen or pencil, none provided.

Washington Winter Classic



DECEMBER 17-18, 2022

ORLOV CHESS ACADEMY (2 LOCATIONS)

SEATTLE: 7212 WOODLAWN AVE NE, SEATTLE, WA 98115
REDMOND: 4174 148TH AVE NE BLD. I, STE. M, REDMOND, WA 98052

A NORTHWEST CHESS GRAND PRIX EVENT

Highest finishing player in the Open and Reserve sections seeded into the Premier and Challengers sections, respectively, of the 2023 WA State Championship.

Dual Format: A 6-round Swiss in two sections:

Open (in Seattle): NWSRS, US Chess & FIDE Tri-Rated.

Reserve U1600 (in Redmond): NWSRS & US Chess Dual-Rated.

Max 30 players in Open section, max 25 players in Reserve (U1600) – please register early! In case of a tie for 1st place, follow-up playoff matches will determine the seeds for the Premier and Challengers sections of the 2023 WA State Championship.

Schedule: Sat 12/17 10 AM, 2:30 PM, 6:30 PM;
Sun 12/18 10 AM, 2:30 PM, 6:30 PM. Games that go long may request a late start for the next round.

Time Control: G/90; +30. Late default: 30 min.

Byes: Two half-point byes available. If interested, request before end of round 2.

Prize Fund: \$1,100 (based on 30 total paid entries)

Open: 1st \$200, 2nd \$140, 3rd \$100
1st U2000/U1800: \$60

Reserve: 1st \$140, 2nd \$100, 3rd \$60
1st U1400/U1200/U1000: \$50; 1st Unrated: \$50

Biggest Upset (per section): \$20

Entry Fee: \$70 by 12/10, \$80 after. Free entry for GMs, IMs, WGMs. \$40 play-up fee if rated under 1600 and playing in Open section.

Memberships: Current US Chess and WCF membership/Northwest Chess subscription required. Memberships must be paid at time of registration.

Rating: US Chess and NWSRS Rated. Open section is also FIDE Rated. Higher of current US Chess Regular, US Chess Online, and NWSRS ratings used to determine section, pairings, and prizes. Higher of US Chess and foreign ratings used at TD discretion.

Registration: nwchess.com/OnlineRegistration
Registration and payment **deadline: Wed. 12/14 @ 5pm.**

Info/Entries: Make checks payable to Washington Chess Federation.

Mail To: Washington Chess Federation
c/o Orlov Chess Academy, 4174 148th Ave. NE, Building I,
Ste. M, Redmond, WA 98052

Contact: Josh Sinanan, WCF President, 206-769-3757

Email: WashingtonChessFederation@gmail.com

Health/Safety Protocols: All players and parents (if U18) are required to sign the [WCF Health / Safety Protocols & Waiver of Liability](#) form prior to the start of the tournament.

2023 PanAmerican Team Chess Championship

&

Seattle New Years Open

January 5 - 8, 2023



Hotel Info & Rates: Westin Seattle (1900 5th Ave, Seattle, WA 98101). \$149 one King or two Queen - Beds. Call (206) 728-1000 (request PanAm rate) or visit the tournament website for online booking.

Format: Two section (Open/U1800) 4 player team event
6 round Swiss; G/90+30
USCF + FIDE rated

One Section 3 player team event
5 round Swiss; G/60+10
unrated

Two sections individual event
(Open / U1700)
5 round Swiss; G/90+30
USCF + Open section FIDE rated

Schedule: 1/5: 10-1pm Onsite Registration
Rounds Thu 5 PM, Fri 10 AM & 5 PM,
Sat 10 AM & 5 PM, Sun 9 AM

1/7: 7-9 am Onsite Registration
Rounds Sat 10 AM & 2 PM & 5 PM,
Sun 9 AM & 12 PM

1/6: 1-4 pm Onsite Registration
Rounds Fri 5 PM, Sat 10 AM & 5 PM,
Sun 10 AM & 3:30PM

Entry Fee: \$200 until 11/30/22, \$250 after
*U1800: \$200 EF covered by Red Bull
*\$100 discount for U2100 teams
participating in CCL

\$200 until 12/14/2022, \$250 after
* EF waived if participating in CEA
mentorship program

Open: \$80 until 12/31/22, \$100 after
* \$40 play-up fee if rated under 1700 in Open
* free entry for GM, IM, WGM, WIM
U1700: \$60 until 12/31/22, \$80 after

Prizes & Awards: Top 4 teams qualify for Final Four
College Chess Championship
Trophies and Plaques for best teams
and individuals (see website)

Trophies and Plaques for best teams
and individuals (see website)

\$2350/b50
Open: \$500/\$350/ \$200
1st U2100/U1900: \$150
Reserve: \$300/\$200/ \$150
1st U1500/U1300/U1100&Unr.: \$100
Biggest Upset (per section): \$25

Side events (Open to All)

Seattle New Years Blitz
Friday, 1/6/2023 at 9:00 PM
Entry Fee: \$30 until 1/5/23, \$40 after.
Free for collegiate and corporate
participants.
Prize Fund: \$700

**Seattle New Years Puzzle
Championship**
Friday, 1/6/2023 at 3:30 - 4:30pm
Registration: \$10 on site
and more ...

**Career Development
Workshops**
Fri 8:30am Resume Workshop (Twitch)
Sat 3:00pm Chess Streamer Workshop
(chess.com)
Sat 8:00pm Networking Mixer



More information and additional side events at <https://cea.gg/panam> or email organizer Florian Helff at chess@cea.gg


Seattle Chess Club Tournaments



Address
 → 7212 Woodlawn Ave NE ←
 Seattle WA 98115 ←


Info
 www.seattlechess.club ←
Addresses for Entries
 SCC Tnmt Dir
 2420 S 137 St
 Seattle WA 98168
 —or—
 www.seattlechess.club

Now on Wednesdays:
Adult beginners classes
with Chad Boey



Please note that the first round of the WA Challengers' Cup will be held on November 4th; so the SCC's November Rains tournament will begin on the 11th.

The SCC is still subletting at the Orlov Chess Academy at Green Lake. **Thanks, Georgi!!!** Mondays (casual chess), Fridays (rated play), and weekend events have mostly been running at 70% of capacity or more. The site can comfortably accommodate about twenty, which is why advance sign-ups are required.

If you would like to help the SCC pay its rent, you can **make a tax-deductible donation** or **join the club** through our website. **Microsoft employees** can also donate, and have their donations matched, through Microsoft. Stay healthy!!

Nov. 12

SCC Novice
Format: 4-SS. Open to U1200 and UNR. **TC:** G/75; d5. **EF:** \$15 by 11/7, \$20 at site. (-\$2 SCC mem., -\$1 mem. other NW dues-req'd CCs). **Prizes:** SCC membership(s). **Reg:** 9-9:45a.m. **Rds:** 10-12:45-3:30-6. **Byes:** 1 (Rd 3/4-commit at reg.). **Misc:** US Chess memb. req'd. NS, NC.

Nov. 13

SCC G/20 Hexes
Format: 5-RR in 6- or 5-player sections. **TC:** G/20;+8. **EF:** \$12 (+\$6 fee for non-SCC). **Prize Fund:** \$\$54 b/6. **Prizes:** \$36-18. **Reg:** 12-12:45 p.m. **Time Frame:** 1 to ~6:30 p.m. **Byes:** 0. **Misc:** US Chess. NS, NC.

Nov. 19

Saturday Quads
Format: 3-RR, 4-plyr sec. by rtg. **TC:** G/120;d5. **EF:** \$9(+\$7 fee for non-SCC). **Prizes:** Free quad entry. **Reg:** 9-9:45 a.m. **Rds:** 10:00-2:15-6:30. **Misc:** US Chess, WCF; OSA. NS, NC.

Nov. 20

Sunday Tornado
Format: 4-SS. **TC:** G/50;+10. **EF:** \$18 (+\$7 fee for non-SCC). **Prizes:** 1st 35%, 2nd 27%, Bottom Half 1st 22%, 2nd 16% (\$10 per EF to prize fund). **Reg:** 10:30-11:15 a.m. **Rds:** 11:30-1:50-4:10-6:30. **Byes:** 1 (Rd 3/4-commit at reg.). **Misc:** US Chess, WCF; OSA. NS, NC.

SCC Fridays

One US Chess-rated round per night (free to SCC members, \$5 per night for others) normally played at a rate of 40/90 followed by 30/60. Drop in for any round!

WA Challengers' Cup:	11/4.
November Rains:	11/11, 18; 12/2.
Closed (go to WA Class):	11/25.
Package Express (G/75;d10):	12/9, 16, 23.
Patzers' Challenge:	12/30.

Coming this December 31st-January 1st, another SCC Insanity tournament. Show how crazy you are by signing up and paying before Thanksgiving, only \$36 for SCC members or \$48 for others. These low entry fees are non-refundable and will be considered donations if you later choose not to play!

NB: There will be at least four separate and consecutive sections between 10:00 a.m. Saturday and circa 7:00 a.m. Sunday.

The 2022 Ignacio Perez Memorial Northwest Chess Grand Prix

Murlin Varner, Chief Numbers Officer

Only three events in September, so the standings haven't changed much. There was the every-Monday event in Boise and the usual Quads and Tornado in Seattle, with a total of fifty entries between the three.

October provided more opportunities, so the standings should get a boost next month, especially for the Idaho and Eastern Washington contingent. That is because of the Norman Friedman Memorial which was held in Coeur d'Alene on the first weekend of the month. That event had a 3x multiplier, so lots of points were earned there. Three other events also happened in October, all in the Seattle area.

November offers up to five opportunities to add to your totals, with the monthly every-Monday event in Boise (this one called "Wellington Served Rare"), the usual SCC Quads and Tornado, and the Washington President's Cup and Washington Class Championships. The latter two are both multiplier events, at 2x and 5x, respectively.

The final month of the final year of the Northwest Chess Grand Prix will conclude with perhaps the biggest event ever in the NWGP, the MexInsurance FIDE Open. With \$10,000 in prizes guaranteed and another \$5,700+ based on entries, this is a 6x tournament. We have had others at 6x (a couple of Washington Opens), but they had a lower overall prize fund. I can just about guarantee that the winners in Idaho will have played in this event. It will have a similar impact on the "Others" standings as well.

Additionally, December will have the regular monthly Mondays (Fishing for FIDE), also in Boise, and the Washington Winter Classic in Redmond and Seattle, Washington, with a 2x multiplier and limited space. I do not yet know what December holds for the Seattle Chess Club, you will just have to read next month's column.

Data below current through October 1.

Washington			Idaho			Other Places						
last	first	pts.	last	first	pts.	last	first	state	pts.			
Masters			Masters			Masters						
1	Pupols	Viktors	75.5	1	Donaldson	W. John	CA	21.0				
2	Lee	Megan	35.0	2	Tang	Zoey	OR	9.0				
2	Orlov	Georgi	35.0									
2	Ready	John L	35.0									
5	Haining	Kyle	30.0									
Experts			Experts			Experts						
1	Jiang	Brandon	60.0	1	Cambareri	Michael E	23.0	1	Sripada	Havish	OR	32.5
2	Gottumukkala	Ananth S	53.0	2	Parsons	Larry R	5.5	2	Tang	Austin	OR	30.5
3	Liu	Austin	52.0					3	Zhang	Brendan	MN	30.0
4	Arganian	David G	48.0					4	Sherrard	Jerry	OR	15.0
5		Two Tied At	35.5					5	Yu	Peter C	CA	10.0
Class A			Class A			Class A						
1	Wang	Ted	81.0	1	Kircher	Caleb	32.0	1	Merwin	Steven E	NV	18.0
2	Lee	Brian	73.0	2	Bodie	Brad R	6.0	2	Murray	David E	OR	15.0
3	Tessiore	Luca G	60.0					2	Nazriev	Rasul	MT	15.0
4	Collinge	Maxwell C	58.0					4	Walthall	Thomas K	MT	12.0
5	Kona	Vidip K	51.0					5	Aiello	Roberto	OR	10.0
Class B			Class B			Class B						
1	Chowdhery	Evan M	65.5	1	Herr	Griffin G	16.5	1	Ravid	Orren	NJ	40.0
1	Zhang	Michelle	65.5	1	McKenzie	Niall	16.5	2	Yang	Arnold T	OR	27.5
3	Li	Edward S	55.5	3	Barrett	Evan	11.5	3	Lykins	Pace	OR	22.5
3	Lin	Michael	55.5	4	Presutti	Michael J	0.0	4	Rankin	Andrew J	MT	16.5
5	Garine	Ujwal	55.0					5	Skovron	James J	MT	15.0
Class C			Class C			Class C						
1	McDevitt	Owen	65.0	1	Lundy	George	76.5	1	Sripada	Anisha	OR	39.0
2	Wong-Godfrey	Emerson P	64.5	2	Longhurst	Corey K	17.5	1	Morehouse	Ethan	OR	22.5
2	Sankar	Abhay	60.0	3	Minichiello	Anthony J	16.5	3	Vasey	Daniel	OR	16.5
4	Li	Emma S	49.0	4	Semancik	Zackary T	10.5	4	Driscoll	Jesse	MT	15.0
5	Jammalamadaka	Varnika	47.5	5	Forster	Manfred	5.5	5	Wagner	Eric	MT	13.5
Class D and below			Class D and below			Class D and below						
1	Han	Shuyi	74.5	1	Widdifield	Tristen A	17.5	1	Deshusses	Simon M	MO	39.0
2	Xu	Zoe Y	67.5	2	Roberts	Liam	14.0	2	Hack	Don	CAN	27.5
3	Burchall	Laurion	65.5	3	Blue-Day	Alexander P	13.0	3	Kodarapu	Neev	OR	25.0
3	Vijayanandh	Vishnu	65.5	3	Nosarev	Vladislav	13.0	3	Lim	Hayul	OR	25.0
5	Saloranta	Leo	64.0	5	Nosarev	Dimitri	9.0	3	Yang	Arthur T	OR	25.0
Overall standings												
1	Wang	Ted	81.0	1	Lundy	George	76.5	1	Ravid	Orren	NJ	40.0
2	Pupols	Viktors	75.5	2	Kircher	Caleb	32.0	2	Deshusses	Simon M	MO	39.0
3	Han	Shuyi	74.5	3	Cambareri	Michael E	23.0	2	Sripada	Anisha	OR	39.0
4	Lee	Brian	73.0	4	Longhurst	Corey K	17.5	4	Sripada	Havish	OR	32.5
5	Xu	Zoe Y	67.5	4	Widdifield	Tristen A	17.5	5	Tang	Austin	OR	30.5
6	Burchall	Laurion	65.5	6	Herr	Griffin G	16.5	6	Zhang	Brendan	MN	30.0
6	Chowdhery	Evan M	65.5	6	McKenzie	Niall	16.5	7	Hack	Don	CAN	27.5
6	Vijayanandh	Vishnu	65.5	6	Minichiello	Anthony J	16.5	7	Yang	Arnold T	OR	27.5
6	Zhang	Michelle	65.5	9	Roberts	Liam	14.0	9	Kodarapu	Neev	OR	25.0
10	McDevitt	Owen	65.0	10	Blue-Day	Alexander P	13.0	9	Lim	Hayul	OR	25.0
11	Wong-Godfrey	Emerson P	64.5	10	Nosarev	Vladislav	13.0	9	Yang	Arthur T	OR	25.0
12	Saloranta	Leo	64.0	12	Barrett	Evan	11.5	12	Lykins	Pace	OR	22.5
13	Jiang	Brandon	60.0	13	Semancik	Zackary T	10.5	12	Morehouse	Ethan	OR	22.5
13	Sankar	Abhay	60.0	14	Nosarev	Dimitri	9.0	14	Donaldson	W. John	CA	21.0
13	Tessiore	Luca G	60.0	15	Nosarev	Liam	8.0	15	Merwin	Steven E	NV	18.0

